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Alcoholism claims more women victims



There are more than 2m alcoholics in West Germany. This makes alcoholism the most common disease in the country.

Most and more women are hitting the bottle. They drink nearly as much as men, although their taste differs.

They go more for liqueurs, and they drink less in pubs and at work and more in the home – often alone.

Women also more often combine drinking with taking tablets.

Average alcohol consumption in West Germany is 149 litres of beer, 26 litres of wine and eight litres of spirits per head.

Of course there is, even among women, hidden alcoholism at work. They take shorts in coffee or thermos flasks.

Often they break out into sweats or have difficulties concentrating and try to cover this up to colleagues by saying they stayed up late the night before, had a party, or that it is a "woman's illness."

And if the truth gets out, bosses usually respond by threatening dismissal rather than recommending a cure. But this pressure often only increases dependence on drink.

A group of ex-alcoholic women in Frankfurt have got together to form a "cured women alcoholics" circle under the aegis of the Protestant Regional Association for the Treatment of Addictive Diseases.

Most of these women say that before they became alcoholics they indulged in "controlled" drinking for months and even years.

Of course it is difficult to pinpoint the moment at which the person becomes addicted. Many women have been in this circle for 10 years and are fighting for themselves and others against a relapse in a society which overwhelms its members with advertising for drink.

Statistics show that every citizen (the statistics include babies) spends on average DM600 on alcohol every year.

Dr Roland Langer of the Frankfurt Bürgerhospital, confirms that the number of alcoholic women is increasing, despite greater conciousness of their social role.

The relapse rate for alcoholism is estimated to be as high as 20 per cent. If this is to be reduced, not only medical therapy but psychological back-up measures are urgently needed.

Increasing alcoholism has increased the importance of the advice given by church counselling centres to alcoholics. The addicts counselling centre of the Protestant Church in Frankfurt reflects the big city situation, Frankfurt and its satellites having a population or 1.5m. The range of church organisations advising and counselling addicts is very wide: 73 parishes are involved.

Deacon Sorgenfrei, one of the counsellors, says that one typical aspect of addict counselling in Frankfurt is "the importance of personal help. We also try to be up to date in methods of treatment and outpatient therapy. We are open and flexible to new modes of treatment."

It is wrong to try to neutralise daily stress by alcohol and tablets. The point is to take joint action against ill-making conditions – and no one knows this better than the women that have been working in the anti-alcohol circle in Frankfurt for the past 10 years.

This does not mean that the problem of alcohol is on their agenda at every meeting. But these women have had similar experiences and so similar questions tend to arise: how can I cope at work? How can I regain the trust of my family? And, finally, how am I to find my place in society?

Eike Gerken

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 29 March 1980)



Playing with fire

Irene Knobel, a 25-year-old Berlin girl who lives in Hamburg, is probably Germany's only professional fire-eater. Madame Flame is her stage name, and despite her job she claims to have suffered no more than the odd blister as she travels the fun fairs. (Photo: ...)

Child labour

Continued from page 14

their part-time jobs. Jens' ... Sven, works in his friend's garage ... repairs drink machines in the ... a friend who is an apprentice electrician ... "I get DM15 to DM20 an hour ... ready almost a fully-fledged mechanic."

Many children also do paid ... home – sticking parcels, sewing ... dresses and so on. Stress begins for ... so children after half an hour. Often ... children doing this kind of work ... under 13 and their mother ... work is their own.

Most of the young workers ... ed to keep the money they earn ... themselves. They buy cassette ... headphones, bikes and mopeds ... furniture for their rooms. Five-legged ... volving chairs are in at the moment ... instance.

These children are working for ... ence. Instead of doing without ... goods, they are losing time for play ... for their own childhood – an ... able loss. In 1979 the Council of ... recommended that more should be ... to make parents aware of the effects ... child labour, which they generally ... derestimated. After all, children ... jobs are only following adults' example.

Child labour was made illegal at the beginning of the century. In the ... century children worked in factories ... mines and small firms. Millions of ... dren in the Third World suffer the ... fate today.

According to statistics of the International Labour Office in Geneva, ... are 29 children working in South ... Asia, 9.7m in the Far East, 9.1m in ... ca and 3.1m in Latin America. Also ... they work like adults, these children ... often do not have enough to eat.

And every year many children ... in these countries because they do ... have enough work to survive.

Against this background the ... in child labour in the rich industrial nations of the West, where child ... work for superfluous consumer goods ... doubly reprehensible.

The Labour Office estimates ... there are 700,000 children working ... Europe. But the real figure is ... higher. There are an estimated 400 ... children working in North Rhine-Westphalia alone. *Erika Bresh...*

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 29 March ...)

Fears that heroin scourge will get still worse

There are over 45,000 registered heroin addicts in West Germany – and last year heroin killed 615 people.

Dr Oskar Schröder, a ministerial director in the Bonn Health Ministry, fears that the "highpoint of the heroin wave has not been reached yet." Schröder was recently appointed head of the Drugs Commission of the United Nations, the first German to be appointed to such high UN office.

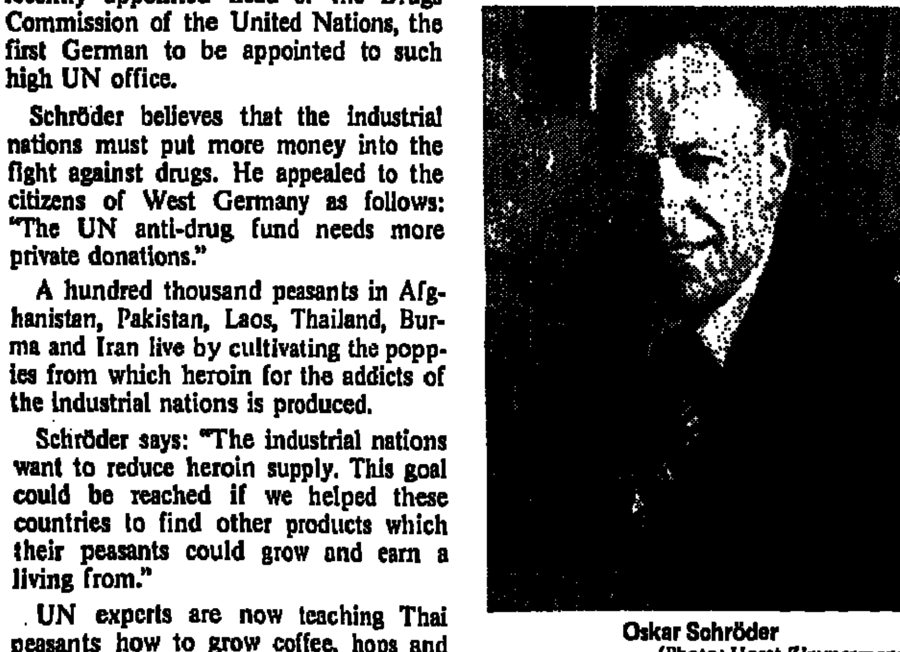
Schröder believes that the industrial nations must put more money into the fight against drugs. He appealed to the citizens of West Germany as follows: "The UN anti-drug fund needs more private donations."

A hundred thousand peasants in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Laos, Thailand, Burma and Iran live by cultivating the poppies from which heroin for the addicts of the industrial nations is produced.

Schröder says: "The industrial nations want to reduce heroin supply. This goal could be reached if we helped these countries to find other products which their peasants could grow and earn a living from."

UN experts are now teaching Thai peasants how to grow coffee, hops and vegetables in 30 villages – a modest start in view of the fact that there are over 800 villages producing poppies in Thailand.

Faced with this enormous task, the UN's funds are not even a drop in the ocean. "In the past 10 years, the fund has received a mere 45m dollars," says Schröder.



Oskar Schröder (Photo: Horst Zimmermann)

Up to now, the US has shouldered the best part of this burden – 4m dollars. Now Washington has had enough of this and said that in future it will only contribute 25 per cent of what is paid in by all other countries. The fund's income will inevitably be cut – despite the fact that Bonn has upped its contribution from DM0.5m to DM2m.

Dr Schröder praises the Japanese shipping industry, which donated 400,000 dollars to the fund. He added that the UN fund would also be grateful for private contributions from West Germans.

The fund's account number is 777, Deutsche Bank, Bonn (UNO Rauschgift Fonds). The German United Nations Society will provide receipts to be presented to tax offices.

Clearly, money alone cannot solve the problem. A number of industrial countries – including France, the UK, the US and Japan – have still not signed the 1971 International Drugs Agreement aimed at controlling chemically produced drugs.

And in the UN Commission the poppy-growing countries are mutinying, arguing, understandably, that the industrial nations insist on them stopping poppy production but are reluctant to control their own production of chemical drugs. *Horst Zimmermann*

(Bremer Nachrichten, 1 April 1980)

The German Tribune

Hamburg, 27 April 1980
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Schmidt bides his time on Moscow invitation

Helmut Schmidt seems in no hurry to take up Mr Brezhnev's renewed invitation to visit Moscow. He is only too well aware of the imponderables.

The foremost is the unpredictable course of events in and around Iran. Another is the intentions, course and results of Mr Gromyko's travels.

Herr Schmidt is not the man to shirk the challenge he faces in the Kremlin, but despite his self-assurance if he does not go he will have given up the chance of full-scale crisis management.

It is an extremely thankless task and overtaxes the Federal Republic's powers regardless of the international importance that West Germany is agreed to command.

Besides, the Bonn Chancellor is in the midst of a general election campaign. He can afford neither to assume a twilight role nor to fail in any mission he might agree to take on.

So he must first coordinate his moves with Bonn's allies, and intensive coordination is required. This alone is difficult enough, as recent weeks and months have shown.

A no less important criterion that will have decided him whether to accept the Kremlin's invitation or not is the extent to which the Soviet Union appears willing to go back on a stubborn and headstrong position.

So far we have been limited to conjecture in the quest for motives. One argument is that the Soviet Union has openly reverted to brutal power politics and itself rent the romantic veil of detente.

Another, while not denying what has happened, such as the brusque rejection of Nato's negotiation offer and the invasion of Afghanistan, assumes miscalculation on Moscow's part, and thus possible readiness to correct mistakes.

Were the first argument to be nearer the truth, an escalation of tension and an unprecedented arms race would inevitably ensue.

Yet this prospect of this ghastly alternative has motivated Europe in general and Bonn in particular to reopen the Kremlin's avenues of negotiation.

Legitimation for this step, including moral justification, was derived from Bonn's share of responsibility for the 17m Germans in the GDR.

This approach is, however, liable to be accused of wishful thinking as long as there is no clear indication that the Soviet Union might be prepared to toe the line.

Moscow must be now have realised the negative consequences of the Soviet adventure in Afghanistan, a country it can no longer pacify militarily, although it might yet do so politically.

The Third World countries Moscow has come to regard as its natural allies in the fight against actual and alleged imperialism have pointed accusing fingers and are calling on the Soviet Union to withdraw.

The United States, which in Soviet eyes is weakened in both its military and mental powers of resistance, governed by a weak President and involved in a crisis with Iran, has nonetheless summoned the strength to respond drastically.

But Moscow's gravest miscalculation may yet prove to have been its judgement of Bonn, both over Nato's decision to develop a new generation of medium-range missiles and over the Olympic boycott.

The Kremlin's judgment may have appeared for a while to be backed up by controversy within the Social Democratic Party in West Germany and within Nato.

But that would have been to underestimate Chancellor Schmidt and his powers of stamina.

Herr Schmidt endorsed the Nato deci-

Continued on page 4

IN THIS ISSUE



Günter Mittag (left), GDR Politbureau member in charge of economic affairs, conferring with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt in Bonn on intra-German ties. The Chancellor is widely expected to meet GDR leader Erich Honecker soon. (See page 3).

Bonn maintains its policy of building bridges with East

Bonn wants its policy of coming to treaty terms with East bloc countries wherever possible to be kept clear of the eddies of international crisis.

It has every intention of doing this in conjunction with its allies.

This is particularly true of ties with the GDR as regulated by the Basic Treaty with East Berlin.

The visit to Bonn by GDR Politbureau member Günter Mittag, who is in charge of economic policy, is seen by the Federal government as confirmation that the GDR likewise still retains the option of seeking to benefit from ties with West Germany on as normal a basis as possible.

But, if the GDR only retains this leeway because the Soviet Union is keen to convey the impression of business as usual so as to stop Bonn from siding internationally with the United States, this policy should reach its limits before long.

In recent months Chancellor Schmidt's entire policy has been directed at postponing for as long as possible the moment of truth at which it was to be seen whether full solidarity with the United States could be reconciled with Ostpolitik as hitherto pursued.

He was hoping something might happen to alleviate the crisis and has continually built bridges, both nationally and in the EEC, to enable the Soviet Union to relax the tension.

But the Soviet response has so far been none too encouraging. The reply to a personal note to Mr Brezhnev was most unsatisfactory.

This was, in the final analysis, the reason why Herr Schmidt finally failed to reiterate his assurance that he would visit Moscow if only Mr Brezhnev were to renew his invitation.

Circumstances are steadily forcing Bonn to close the gap between it and the United States and Mr Brezhnev has asked whether the Chancellor might like to visit Moscow this summer.

It is Olympic summer in Moscow, and the Bonn Government has just summoned the courage to advise its athletes not to take part.

Besides, the proposed date shows that Mr Brezhnev is still in no great hurry. Crisis could mount before Herr Schmidt has had time to visit the Soviet capital.

So the Chancellor will have no option but to clarify Bonn's viewpoint beforehand.

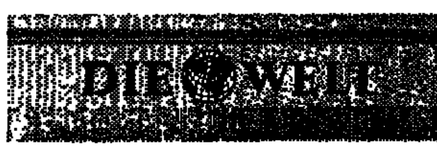
(Der Tagesspiegel, 17 April 1980)

Lambsdorff opens Hanover Fair

Bonn Economic Affairs Minister Count Lambsdorff (second from left) takes a closer look at a Brazilian commercial vehicle engine exhibited by one of 170 Brazilian exhibitors at the Hanover Fair. He was accompanied by Brazil's Industry Minister Joao Camila Penna (left). (Photos: dpa)

WORLD AFFAIRS

Bonn's decision vital to whole boycott bid



The Bonn Government is sure to recommend that the West German National Olympic Committee boycott the Olympic Games in Moscow.

And the NOC, despite contradictory comments by officials, is likely to agree to the recommendation.

Since the American Olympic Committee has agreed to President Carter's demand and decided not to send an American team, the question now is: are the Olympic Games dead?

A decision in West Germany favouring the boycott is bound to affect other National Olympic Committees in Western Europe. Similar action by them would reduce the Games to a rump that could hardly lay claim to have gathered together the young people of the world.

Moscow will not then be able to lay claim to be taken seriously as an international test of amateur sporting prowess either.

A boycott of Moscow does not necessarily mean curtains for the Olympic Games as a whole. Cries of wolf as the boycott became an increasingly distinct possibility were designed for immediate rather than long-term effect.

It is hard to imagine the East bloc forgoing either partly or substantially what is virtually the only international level at which it can demonstrate "quality" and world's best performances.

In all probability the next international sporting encounters will be marred by East bloc counter-measures, but the Soviet Union is unlikely to stay away from the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics entirely.

The Soviet reaction to US Secretary of State Vance in Lake Placid may well be typical of how the Russians will behave in future.

There were noises from the Soviet team management that major competitors, such as the ice hockey squad, could be withdrawn in protest.

But after phone calls to Moscow it was decided not to resort to such drastic measures.

Show of sporting prowess

Important for Moscow

The international demonstration of its sporting prowess is much more important to the Soviet Union than a national boycott or even a boycott of the entire East bloc.

There are signs that some members of the International Olympic Committee may be considering pulling the rug from under a Western boycott by amending the rules to allow individual competitors to take part as well as official teams sponsored by individual National Olympic Committees.

But an Olympic Games contested by individual competitors would be a rump affair in equal measure if sports associations no longer nominated teams.

Nomination is the crucial criterion, not whether teams take part shouldering flags or to the accompaniment of national anthems.

If everyone is entitled to take part, and not just those who have qualified in preliminaries of some kind or other. Olympic competitors would be the keenest, but not necessarily the best.

International sporting events are not dead, nor are the Olympic Games. What has died is the idea of sport separate from politics and other dirty work, sport as an unsullied international link.

The demise of this idea is not exactly new either. In the past the Soviet Union has chosen time and again not to compete in sporting events on political grounds.

But past occasions were all clad in alibis designed to prove that the basic idea of sport leading a separate existence of its own still held good.

Afghanistan has now served notice, unmistakably and ineluctably, of the reality. Sport has submitted to the primacy of politics.

It had to do so, much though one might lament the fact, and although one might wish there were a field in which people could compete with one another independently of political hatred and the hue and cry (and although sport might be considered a suitable field), that is a dream that has been spoilt since long before Afghanistan.

It is more conducive to the sporting idea of honesty and cleanliness not to forget the reality for the sake of ideals. There is in any case a great deal of hypocrisy in sport.

And there has been no shortage of it in advance of the Moscow Olympics. The amateur spirit has been tarnished anew by athletes who have lamented that their prospect of making a mint of money out of Olympic honours from advertising and the like has now been wrested from them.

Officials who haughtily claim they are impervious to political influence (yet have banned Taiwan and South Africa from international sport on political grounds) have contributed precious little towards offsetting dissatisfaction with double standards among young people.

The Olympics may not be dead, but a fair share of hypocrisy is; and one can but hope that the tussle over whether or not to go to Moscow will soon come to an end.

Discussion of the "world's most wonderful matter of no importance" has much too long overshadowed one of the world's foremost matters of some importance.

The matter in question is Afghanistan and the Soviet policy that lies behind it: a policy of contempt for mankind and disturbance of the peace.

Politicians, who have manoeuvred long enough in minor theatres, must now find time to coordinate more far-reaching measures to counter Soviet expansion.

The boycott decision may have the advantage of sending a fresh breeze through joint endeavour to lift the fog of doubt and half-truths. But that can, of course, be no more than a start.

E. von Loewenstern

(Die Welt, 15 April 1980)



(Cartoon: Hans-Joachim Gerboth / Kölnische Rundschau)

Matthöfer 'an architect' of Turkish rescue

The decision by the major Western countries to bankroll Turkey has been somewhat overshadowed by the Olympic boycott issue and trade restrictions with Iran.

A full-scale foreign-exchange support programme has been agreed on. It will comprise $1.16bn this year for a Nato country on the pact's south-eastern flank that is breathing heavily, to say the least, in economic terms.

The rescue bid on Turkey's behalf, coordinated by Bonn, deserves more attention than it has so far been given.

Finance Minister Hans Matthöfer and his state secretary Manfred Lahnstein, set about masterminding the salvage operation with energy and skill even though it was hardly in keeping with the interests of their portfolio, as it were.

Herr Matthöfer acted as an Atlantic and a European politician, showing greater breadth of vision than a mere Finance Minister anxious to balance his books.

In his role as Finance Minister he is going to have to foot part of the bill, and he knew from the start how difficult it would be to squeeze another $300m from the 1980 Bonn budget.

The Bonn Government would even have been prepared to dig deeper into its coffers. It would have contributed more than $300m if the US government had been willing to follow suit.

It is greatly to be regretted what Washington felt unable to do so and the total aid to Turkey was less than had been envisaged.

But even so, Ankara now has funds at its disposal and is in a position to stage an economic recovery bid should it succeed in developing a sufficient head of steam.

At a time when there is constant talk of the indispensable need for solidarity in the West, this massive financial backing for Turkey, a fellow-member of Nato, ought not to go unnoticed.

The $300m Bonn is contributing is not chicken feed. Nor for that matter is the $100m the French have agreed to contribute.

It costs nothing to boycott the Moscow Olympics but a packet to stabilise Turkey, which is on the brink of economic ruin and threatens to cease to be an effective Nato partner.

This aid to Turkey is the first effective bid to contain the crisis triggered by the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Maintaining the programme's impetus and leading it to a successful conclusion will be no easy task. Resistance must be overcome (and will continue to need overcoming) in Germany and elsewhere.

A number of Social Democratic MPs in the Bonn Bundestag are reluctant to lend support to the Conservative Demirel government in Ankara.

But one is bound to wonder whether they would prefer to wait until civil war breaks out in Turkey or the military take over and rule the country in their own way.

What is more, funds earmarked for Ankara must be pruned from other Bonn Government expenditure currently included in the budget estimates.

They will then no longer be available for spending at home, which will not add to the liking of the entire Bundestag by any stretch of the imagination.

What makes matters even more difficult, Turkey is far from both economic and political stability. Its internal dissension is apparent from vocal protests lodged by Turkish organisations in West Germany against the proposed aid programme.

Yet the rescue bid is still in its early days, as are the sacrifices the Turkish government will have to ask people in Turkey to make.

The attempt must nonetheless be undertaken. We must try to ensure that Ankara remains a member of the Western alliance, and the financial support is by no means the end of the matter.

Public opinion in West Germany must accustom itself to Turkey remaining dependent on aid from without in the years ahead.

Heinz Murmann

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 17 April 1980)

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INTRA-GERMAN AFFAIRS

New horizon as top GDR official visits Bonn

A member of the GDR Politbureau had had discussions with Chancellor Schmidt in Bonn following a visit to the Hanover fair.

High-ranking GDR officials have often visited the fair, but the subsequent talks between Günter Mittag and Herr Schmidt marks a new development in intra-German relations.

Of course it is no accident that this meeting is taking place now. The cooling of East-West relations following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan meant that the talks, planned for this spring, between Helmut Schmidt and GDR leader Erich Honecker, were postponed.

Both sides wanted to avoid the impression that they were cosily holding intra-German talks while their main allies were showing their teeth.

The less spectacular visit by Günter Mittag to Bonn can certainly be regarded as a substitute for the postponed Schmidt-Honecker meeting — even though it was planned at a time when Schmidt still intended to visit the GDR.

The fact that Mittag is visiting Bonn whereas hitherto it has mostly been Bonn ministers who have visited East Berlin or Leipzig, shows which side is more interested in this meeting.

The economic situation in the GDR is very poor. Increasing costs of raw materials and energy, heavier defence expenditure and unsatisfactory increases in productivity have made the GDR more dependent than ever before on Western currency.

As US President Carter has reduced trade with the USSR and expects his allies to follow suit, the GDR leadership has come to realise more strongly than ever how important are its trade with West Germany and the many treaties bringing in deutschemarks between Bonn and East Berlin.

Mittag's visit to Bonn is aimed not only at ensuring that there should be as little damage as possible to relations in the next months but quietly to build up these relations.

Mittag has had a remarkable career. His experience and his manner mean that he is the man in the Politbureau with whom such level-headed and effective Western politicians as Helmut Schmidt and Minister of Economic Affairs Count Lambsdorff can best talk about East-West relations.

As one observer put it: "He discusses the matter in hand without ideological ballast."

Since the death of Honecker protegé Werner Lamberz and the sickness of Hermann Axen, Günter Mittag of the top GDR officials has most experience of the West. For years he has been concerned with more than just the internal development of the GDR economy.

He has travelled extensively, to Japan and France for example, in efforts to strengthen the GDR's economic ties with non-Communist countries.

Mittag not only enjoys Honecker's confidence. He also has a good reputation in Moscow. In the years of transition from Ulbricht to Honecker, Mittag faded from the scene. Five years after Ulbricht's departure, he came back into the fold, taking over high government posts again. Many observers believe that he had Soviet pressure to thank for this comeback.

Günter Mittag was born on 8 October 1926 in Stettin. At the end of the war, he was an 18-year-old railway worker. He immediately joined the KPD (later the SED, Socialist Unity Party) and worked at first in the Railway Workers' Union.

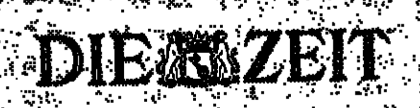
Up to 1951 there are gaps in his curriculum vitae. It could be that he spent some time training as a cadre in Moscow. At any rate, his advancement was rapid — at the age of 27 he was a departmental leader in the SED Central Committee.

In June 1962, at the age of 35, Mittag became Secretary for Industry in the party apparatus and thus one of the most influential economic officials of the SED. Then came the working out, introduction and failure of the New Economic System, which Walter Ulbricht and many economic officials hoped would lead to a more flexible system of planning.

Mittag and Erich Apel, director of the State Planning Commission, wrote most of the theoretical articles on this reform.

When the reform was diluted and the Soviet Union's import requirements strained the GDR economy to breaking point, Erich Apel locked himself in his office and killed himself with a gunshot in December 1965. Mittag did not go to this extreme. He took part in the so-called second phase of the new system and later in the Economic System of Socialism — both deviations from the dream of a socialist economic system which, by "economic levers", was meant to regulate itself.

In September 1966 Mittag became a full member of the GDR Politbureau.




He was now right at the top. But it seemed that he had lost some of his elan, even though he did not express hs disappointments. Later he once said that no one had the right to take his own opinion as the criterion and under the guise of a scientific approach to "bypass the party's main direction." This was a reference to the training of scientists but sounded like a summary of his own experience with the New Economic System.

In October 1973 Horst Sindermann, on whom great hopes were pinned at the time, succeeded Willi Stoph as President of the Council of Ministers and Mittag resigned his post as secretary in the Central Committee to become Sindermann's deputy. This was not necessarily a step up, because the Council of Ministers is an executive organ; the decisions are made by the party apparatus.

Werner Krolokowski, an inveterate dogmatist, became secretary for industry. Three years later, he and Mittag swapped jobs: Mittag again became secretary for industry, Stoph President of the Council of Ministers, Krolokowski his deputy.

Stoph has been ill for some time and Krolokowski, as his deputy, has better chances of succeeding him and thus becoming No. 2 in the state.

But Mittag has also consolidated his position, as his nomination as member of the State Council last June shows.

Mittag's task is similar to that of a captain who has to steer his ship between reefs with the engines weak, the rudder failing and the sea stormy.

Even in normal times, the GDR economy has its hands full correcting planning errors and stimulating growth. For the past years it has had to cope with the additional problem of increasing raw materials prices and corresponding trade deficits. For oil imports from the Soviet Union alone, the GDR now has to pay 4.5bn East German marks more than in 1971. As the SED's policy is to keep prices of basic foodstuffs, wages and services stable, the state has to subsidise these sectors to the tune of more than 16bn East German marks a year.

The SED leadership is doing everything it possibly can to cope with this malaise. It is relying on rationalisation, modernisation, imposed technological progress, organising industry into large units (*Kombinate*) increasing exports and reducing imports.

It is doubtful that these measures will bring the relief sought. It would at any rate be disastrous for the GDR economy if its crucial relations with West Germany were to be broken off as a result of international tension.

The Bonn and East Berlin governments made haste to complete the new transport agreement, which should be signed this month, before West Germany decides on the Olympic boycott issue. The GDR will get DM500m for the building of the autobahn crossing point at Wartha/Herleshausen, extending the Berlin-Helmstedt autobahn to two lanes, and extending the Mittelland canal; this sum is over and above the payments already agreed on.

In 1980 the GDR will get DM1.3bn from Bonn for transit visas, autobahn construction, extension of canals, the removal of waste, rubbish and sewage. Then come income from visits and travel within the GDR by West German citizens, difficult to put a figure on but about DM300m; about DM130m for releasing prisoners and re-uniting families.

East Berlin also has a special interest-free overdraft facility of DM850m — this represents a saving of interest of DM80m.

If there should be a further cooling in East-West relations, all this would not necessarily be endangered. Much is based on long-term agreements and most is also in the interests of West Germany. The present situation has underlined that intra-German agreements and economic relations have led to a complex network of ties which cannot simply be disentangled even in times of crisis.

The Federal Republic of Germany is tghe GDR's second-largest trade partner. Intra-German trade this year will be worth over DM10bn. There are dozens of factories and plants in East Germany built by companies from West Germany and West Berlin — and spare parts will continue to be needed for them: chemical and steel works, foundries and granulation plants, furniture and meat factories and many others.

The GDR not only wants to maintain but to extend these connections. And it looks as if the power-station project proposed by the GDR plays a key role here. The GDR wants West Germany to built a coal power station for it. This power station could help in the electrification of East German railways thus saving diesel oil and coal.

It would be paid for by East Germany supplying electricity to West Berlin — and it looks as if the GDR is willing to allow an electricity sharing system between West Germany and West Berlin — a connection West Berlin urgently needs.

In February Chancellor Schmidt turned down the idea of negotiations on this and other projects because the time was not right. Western observers expect Günter Mittag to bring these matters up in his talks with Schmidt. There is no doubt that such a project, though expensive, would be highly interesting for West Berlin, and the opportunity should certainly be taken to note it down on a list of subjects for negotiation.

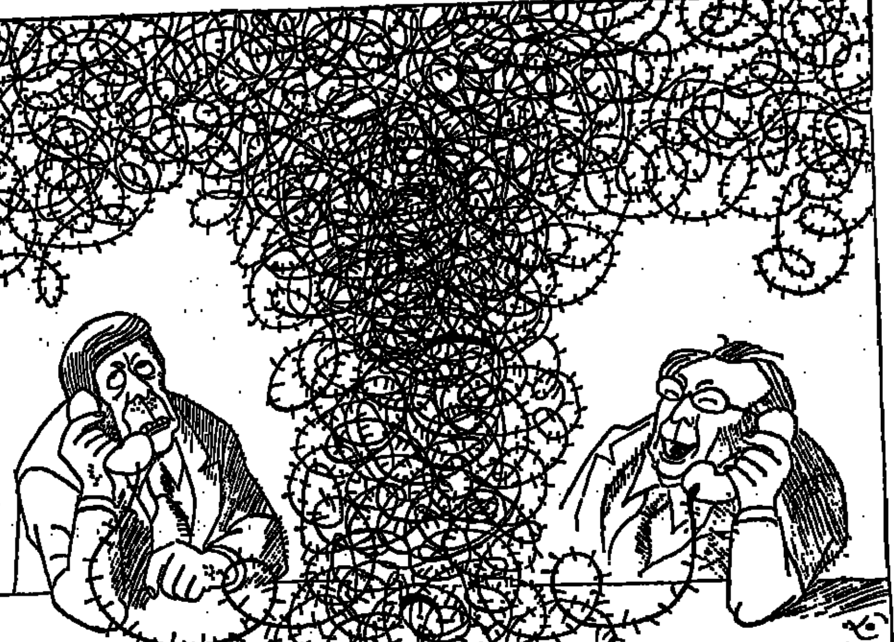
Another relevant problem is the so-called swing credit in intra-German trade. The original purpose of this was to allow both sides scope for short-term fluctuations in supplies and payments. However, this system has long since degenerated into mere preferential credit for the GDR.

There have been several attempts to reduce swing and there are due to be negotiations in the first half of this year on a reduction of swing from 1982 onwards. At the moment these negotiations could only be to the GDR's disadvantage and it will probably therefore attempt to postpone them for as long as possible. And the Bonn government will wait till the general election.

Both sides are on slippery ground. It looks, though, as if the GDR wants to make maximum use of the little scope it has within the East Bloc.

The East German Government cannot feel too comfortable about the situation. The other East European states regard relations between the two German states, which appear to be more stable

Continued on page 8



Keeping the German-German line open.

(Cartoon: E. M. Lang / Süddeutsche Zeitung)

■ HOME AFFAIRS

Lines clearly drawn for crucial State poll

Election campaigning is in full swing in North Rhine-Westphalia, where voters go to the polls on 11 May. More than 12 million voters are eligible to cast their votes in a key state assembly poll five months ahead of the October general election.

All parties are quick to deny that the North Rhine-Westphalian elections will in any way be a pointer to the outcome of the Bundestag poll, but these denials mean no more than that the parties are unsure of their prospects in the Rhine and the Ruhr.

None of them want to nail their colours to the mast, but once voting is over they will all be madly speculating on the likely outcome of the 5 October general election.

The fronts are clearly drawn. The Social and Free Democratic coalition in Düsseldorf, led by SPD Premier Johannes Rau and FDP leader Burkhard Hirsch, is determined to retain power.

To oust them the Christian Democrats, led by Heinrich Köppler (until his untimely death of a heart attack on 20 April) and Kurt Biedenkopf, need to gain an absolute majority.

The two major parties are following different strategies at different levels in their bid to decide the outcome.

The Social Democrats are doing what all parties who can lay claim to a popular Bonn Chancellor have always done. They are setting great store by Helmut Schmidt.

This is their best bet of papering over the fact that Düsseldorf Premier Johannes Rau has not made much of a reputation for himself even after 18 months in office. Heinz Kühn, his predecessor, was in another category altogether.

The SPD also field arguments relevant to Bonn as to why voters must ensure continuation of the SPD-FDP coalition in North Rhine-Westphalia.

If North Rhine-Westphalia were to go Christian Democrat the present Bonn government would be in the minority in the Bundesrat, or upper chamber of the Bonn Bundestag.

Helmut Schmidt would then be unable to govern in Bonn and it is up to voters in the Rhine and the Ruhr to help keep Franz Josef Strauss out of the Bonn Chancellery by voting for Johannes Rau in North Rhine-Westphalia, the Social Democrats say.

Thus the SPD has opted for the classic approach of calling on voters to vote *for B as a gesture of support for A*, whereas the CDU has chosen to fight the campaign on state issues.

The Christian Democrats are critical of Herr Rau and the work of a somewhat jaded SPD-FDP coalition. Their specific points of attack are education (comprehensive schools), indebtedness, bureaucracy and energy policy.

The SPD is accused of criminal negligence in failing to forge ahead with the construction of coal-fired power stations. It is also said to be given to double talk on atomic energy.

The CDU reckons the present state government is jeopardising the industrial future of the Ruhr, and between Duisburg and Dortmund this is an argument that will always be given an attentive hearing.

Forecasts of the election outcome are a risky business. Much will depend on the turnout, on the showing of the Greens (as ecologists dub themselves) and on the voters' reaction to the death of North Rhine-Westphalian CDU leader Heinrich Köppler.

Will *sympathy result in electoral gains? His illness certainly motivated* CDU fieldworkers to canvass even harder for their party.

In 1975 the state election turnout was 86 per cent. At present there are no signs that this record will be equalled, let alone surpassed.

Yet a high turnout is the key to SPD success, as the party well knows. Mobilising voters in the Ruhr is thus the prime objective.

The Social Democrats' campaign slogan is merely "Go and Vote!" There is no mention of specific political objectives but it obvious what worries the SPD.

Many SPD voters failed to turn out in both the European Assembly elections last June and last autumn's round of local government elections — to the benefit of the CDU.

In Baden-Württemberg, where the SPD fared none too well in state elections recently, turnout was unspectacular too, while campaigning is sluggish in the Saar, which goes to the polls a few days before North Rhine-Westphalia.

People in the Rhine and the Ruhr are a level-headed lot. Will the parties succeed in motivating them to flock to the polling-booths?

The entire climate of home affairs is no more than lukewarm at present. Social Democrats are using Shadow Chancellor Franz Josef Strauss as a whipping boy to canvass support.

Contrary to their original intention the Christian Democrats have accordingly decided to phase down Herr Strauss's campaign commitments. In the last four weeks of the North Rhine-Westphalian campaign he will make only eight speeches, mainly in safe country areas.

Unlike Bremen or Baden-Württemberg, bastions of the SPD and the CDU respectively, no one party can expect to gain an absolute majority in North Rhine-Westphalia.

So the Greens, were they to scale the five-per-cent hurdle and enter the Düsseldorf state assembly, could wreak more havoc in North Rhine-Westphalia than elsewhere.

It is by no means impossible, although far from probable, that the Greens might prevent either side from gaining the 101 seats needed to form a majority government.

Then turmoil would be unleashed indeed, but the Greens are more likely to fall foul of the five-per-cent clause, in which case their votes will be shared by the others.

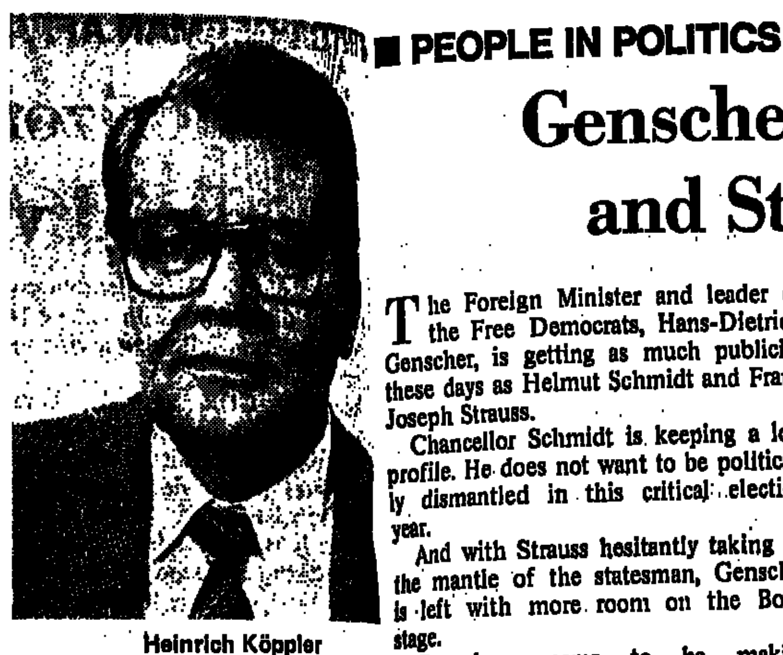
The CDU is more likely to benefit from this share-out than the SPD, while the FDP, which polled 6.7 per cent last time round, stands a chance of political survival, although it is by no means out of the danger zone.

Anything could happen. The reins of government in Düsseldorf could well change hands. Then again, they might well not.

As in Lower Saxony, the CDU would then have gained an absolute majority of seats without the backing of an absolute majority of votes cast. So a few thousand voters could well decide the outcome.

Wolfgang Mauersberg

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 14 April 1980)



Heinrich Köppler

(Photo: Marianne von der L

Death during campaign

Heinrich Köppler, 54, CDU leader in North Rhine-Westphalia, died this month only three weeks before assembly elections in his home State.

He led the Christian Democrats early in the campaign, but had a heart attack over Easter and was taken to a Düsseldorf hospital.

A spokesman for the CDU said he had probably died of a second heart attack after an encouraging recovery.

Christian Democrats in North Rhine-Westphalia were shocked by the news.

Köppler had intended taking an Easter break from electioneering.

But his heart let him down. An injection eased the pain so much that after a few days he was back receiving campaign managers at his sickbed.

Signs of improvement were deceptive, however. He died on the eve of a key mid-term poll in a general election year.

The many posts he held will surely have worn him out. He was deputy chairman of the CDU at national level, chairman of the executive committee of the North Rhine-Westphalian CDU as well as leader of the party's Rhineland region.

He was also Shadow Premier and Opposition leader in a State assembly poll that not for nothing has been dubbed a Bundestag election in miniature.

His life story was neither adventurous nor problematic. He always kept his balance, partly due, perhaps, to his role as a professional Roman Catholic, as he dubbed himself.

From Catholic youth leader in Wiesbaden in 1946 he rose to general secretary of the Central Committee of German Catholics, a post he held from 1956 until 1965.

He skirted membership of the Hitler Youth by active service, as it were, by first working on the land after the war, then read law at Erlangen and Mainz.

He embarked on a political career in 1949, going to Bonn as private secretary to Bundestag Speaker Köhler. But he did not become a Bonn MP until 1965.

Three years later CDU Interior Minister Ernst Benda appointed him parliamentary state secretary, but in 1969 he went into state politics in North Rhine-Westphalia.

In North Rhine-Westphalia he showed himself to be more than a politician elbowing his way to the top. Fairness and consideration were always typical of Heinrich Köppler, especially towards political adversaries.

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 21 April 1980)

■ PEOPLE IN POLITICS

Genscher in limelight as Schmidt and Strauss keep low profiles

The Foreign Minister and leader of the Free Democrats, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, is getting as much publicity these days as Helmut Schmidt and Franz Joseph Strauss.

Chancellor Schmidt is keeping a low profile. He does not want to be politically dismantled in this critical election year.

And with Strauss hesitantly taking on the mantle of the statesman, Genscher is left with more room on the Bonn stage.

Genscher seems to be making speeches and giving interviews everywhere while others remain silent. On Afghanistan, Genscher advocates a tough, uncompromising policy towards the Soviets. Now he and basically he alone has to rescue the FDP from the dangerous maelstrom of the three forthcoming elections.

Can he do all this on his own?

The FDP leadership wants to play down the idea of a duel between Schmidt and Strauss and replace it with the concept of a troika of three dominating political figures — in which Genscher plays an equal role.

In truth Genscher is in danger of becoming Bonn's major entertainer, if not its sole entertainer. He uses the chances of a good master of ceremonies in innumerable election campaign appearances and by means of statements via party headquarters or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In the cabinet, he reigns alongside Helmut Schmidt and defends the bastions against the left. He talks with foreign ministers and ambassadors from every country under the sun. Can a politician survive such a gruelling programme?

Genscher, the great integrating figure within the FDP, certainly need not complain about lack of profile. But is it the right profile? Genscher represents the FDP more than any other party leader can claim to represent his party. But this also means that the FDP is measured against Genscher.

The FDP must surely feel rather awkward when it hears its lord and master constantly being praised by the Opposition for his "tough line" in foreign and disarmament policies, when conservatives describe him as the "hardliner" of the Federal Republic of Germany.

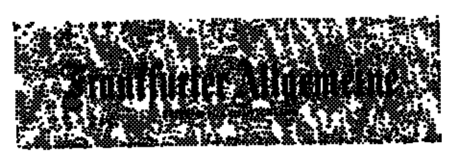
Has he put the brakes on detente — without considering many of his FDP voters?

Genscher does not see it in these terms, at least not today. Genscher interprets his attitude as follows: "The Foreign Minister cannot take electoral considerations into account."

He says he is now doing no more and no less than what a German Minister of Foreign Affairs has to do in this situation. And besides the formula of balance of power as the condition for detente was not his invention. This was known long before the Afghan crisis.

This could allow us to conclude that Genscher, who became Interior Minister in the first SPD/FDP government in 1969 and Foreign Minister when Helmut Schmidt succeeded Willy Brandt, was sceptical about the Brandt-Scheel ostpolitik from the start.

Genscher says that he was not sceptical but level-headed about it. He said he



always believed Soviet policy was expansionist in tendency and Moscow's present neo-imperialist approach of towards the Third World confirms him in this analysis.

But this does not affect his willingness to negotiate — given a balance of power.

With the Afghan crisis Genscher, from being the administrator of foreign policy, became its guardian and the censor of aberrant nuances in the case of Wehner and Brandt. He has, in his opinion, few differences with Helmut Schmidt, in foreign policy or in other fields.

He says that his relationship with the Chancellor has been "an uninterruptedly positive development." Genscher's relations with the SPD as a whole are not so good and for him the question of the future of the coalition depends largely on the future shape of the SPD.

He does not say this in a headmasterly way. But he must take the future development of the SPD into account as he soberly works out plans for the FDP's survival.

Genscher's job as Foreign Minister brings greater burdens than ever before. And at the same time he is the linchpin in the FDP election campaign.

This is an almost incredible accumulation of tasks. How far can he push himself? Where is the limit? Genscher himself does not seem to be worried about his ability to bear these burdens. It may seem like a contradiction, but the constant and repeated warnings to him to look to his health in recent years seem to have given him new strength.

He feeds, physically and psychologically, on the realisation of his own limits. He has reduced the number of entries in his appointments diary and he tries to keep weekends free — for reading documents, not for relaxation.

More important, Genscher has come to realise that his strength is not unlimited. This has given him greater composure, the ability to withdraw into himself in the midst of turbulence. He remains constantly vigilant, as determined as ever to be everywhere and know everything, even if it has to be by telephone.

But he has also learnt that the government and the party will have to get by without him some time and the thought no longer perturbs him — he will then just be an ordinary MP or work as a lawyer in Bremen again.

He cannot say when this will be, though. It is not in his view a question of age. He says every man has creative phases, which come to an end some time. Six years ago he was determined to leave the government at the end of the then that session of parliament. But when Walter Scheel became President, Genscher had to, and wanted to, stay.

He has now been party leader for 6 1/2 years and a government minister for 10 1/2 years. He knows that "there are certain offices to which one cannot go on giving infinitely."

Now, as he faces his toughest ever challenge, he feels in fine form. This may be normal for a Foreign Minister, even in times of heavy pressure. But for an FDP leader who in past years has,



Hans-Dietrich Genscher

alone, climbed giddy heights and suffered severe blows it is nothing short of a miracle.

Defeat in Lower Saxony, recovery in Hesse, neck-and-neck in Schleswig-Holstein, the sigh of relief in Baden-Württemberg: defeats and victories in the FDP are put down not exclusively but largely to the account of the party leader.

And this is the great risk for Genscher. If the FDP should falter on the Saar or fail to defend its bastion in North Rhine-Westphalia, then his star will wane. So despite his new found composure, Genscher has to fight.

This is what drives him to appear constantly on the political stage. There he does not act as the gifted statesman destined from birth to make history.

Will power, energy, credibility and an uncanny sense of what is tactically necessary make Genscher a unique phenomenon in German politics. He has never been a daredevil — more a man who has made walking the political tightrope an art form. *Thomas Meyer*

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 5 April 1980)

Kohl begins to overcome disappointment

Helmut Kohl, leader of the CDU/CSU Opposition was 50 on 3 April. Like his predecessor as leader, Rainer Barzel, he has already climbed the heights and plumbed the depths of a political career by the age of 50.

He failed to become Chancellor, though he came very near. In the last election, the CDU/CSU was 200,000 votes short of an absolute majority.

This disappointment rankled with Helmut Kohl for a long time, making him bitter and uncertain and almost driving him into isolation. Last summer he resigned as Opposition Candidate for the Chancellorship.

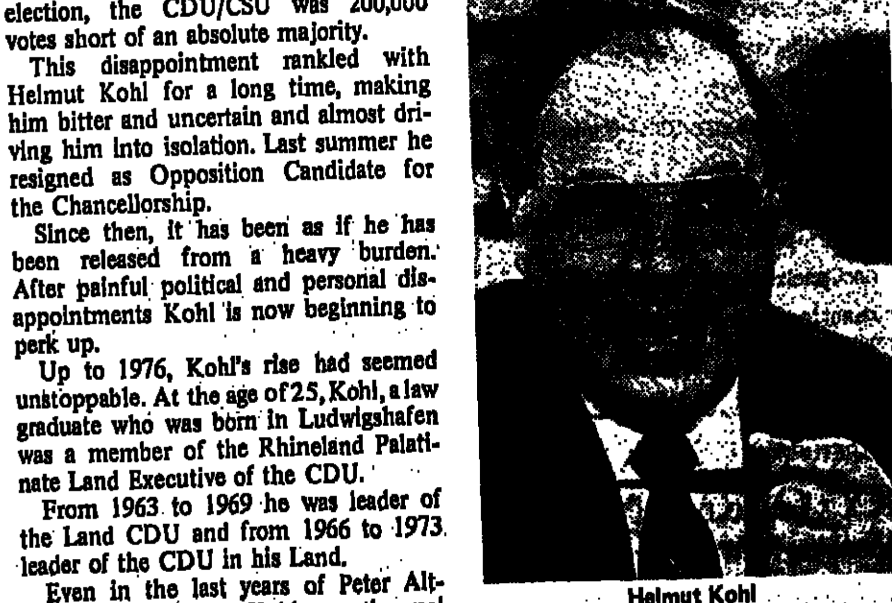
Since then, it has been as if he has been released from a heavy burden. After painful political and personal disappointments Kohl is now beginning to perk up.

Up to 1976, Kohl's rise had seemed unstoppable. At the age of 25, Kohl, a law graduate who was born in Ludwigshafen was a member of the Rhineland Palatinate Land Executive of the CDU.

From 1963 to 1969 he was leader of the Land CDU and from 1966 to 1973 leader of the CDU in his Land.

Even in the last years of Peter Altmeier's government, Kohl was the real power in the Land. When he became Prime Minister in 1969 this was no more than a confirmation of his leading and undisputed position.

As Rainer Barzel's rival, he stood for the post of CDU leader in 1971. This



Helmut Kohl

(Photos: Marianne von der Lancken)

was a trial of strength. Two years later, the leadership of the party fell into his lap, so to speak.

After the 1976 general election, Kohl resigned as Prime Minister and moved to Bonn to take over as leader of the Opposition. He found the going in the Bundestag tough. In Mainz he had been the undisputed master but in Bonn he not only had to cope with the Chancellor and the coalition but was also plagued with quarrels in his own party.

The CSU's Kreuth resolutions led to a trial of strength with CSU leader Franz Josef Strauss which almost destroyed the CDU/CSU.

The stronger and louder the criticism of his weakness as a leader became, the more sensitively Helmut Kohl reacted, withdrawing into a small circle of confidants who did not always give him the best advice.

Now that the problem of the Shadow Chancellor has been resolved, Helmut Kohl is becoming his old self again. He is more relaxed, self-confident and composed, and he is regaining his former political force.

The dream of the Chancellorship is has probably flown for ever, even though he would still be young enough for this office in four or eight years.

By then there will be other Land Prime Ministers in line for the job. Now he will probably remain leader of the Opposition, regardless of the result of the Bundestag election.

And there is many a post one can imagine Helmut Kohl filling.

Werner Bollmann

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 3 April 1980)

Continued from page 1

sion not, as Soviet propaganda subsequently claimed, so as to have shown himself willing to oblige the Pentagon.

He was genuinely worried that manufacture and deployment of Soviet SS-20 missiles were assuming alarming proportions from Europe's point of view.

At the same time it was mainly his government that persuaded Nato to combine the decision to rearm with an offer to negotiate a stop to the missile arms race.

The Soviet Union also assiduously overlooked (as did a number of pundits in Washington) what was clearly indicated in the communiqué issued after the January consultations in Paris between Helmut Schmidt and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.

The West German and French leaders had pointed out that it was up to the Soviet Union to create the conditions that would enable the Moscow Olympics to go ahead as planned.

Moscow would need to withdraw from Afghanistan, but this could only lead to even greater confusion in the United States.

This was because had set his ultimatum deadline too narrow, not even allowing the Soviet Union a theoretical prospect of at least starting the withdrawal.

So Mr Brezhnev's invitation has not been extended to a politician unsure of himself or likely to lose much sleep over where German priorities lay.

The circumstances of crisis in Afghanistan and Iran have proved testing for both Nato in general and ties between Bonn and Washington in particular, but they havealsoshownthey can stand the test.

Opinion polls have shown that West Germans favour detente by an overwhelming majority, but although they are concerned to keep the peace there is not a majority in favour of policies without or against the United States.

Any attempt to carry out policies of this kind would be sure to lead to the collapse of the Bonn coalition led by Herr Schmidt and his Foreign Minister Herr Genscher.

The Chancellor has reminded the Soviet Union of its share of responsibility in Iran so as to dispel the last doubts as to where Bonn stands.

On the UN Security Council, Moscow condemned the taking of US hostages and called for their release, yet the Soviet Union prevented a later Security Council decision in favour of imposing sanctions on Tehran.

The Kremlin would be badly mistaken if it were to believe it could warm its hands at a fire lit by a criminal and likely to set the entire world in flames.

Whether or not Herr Schmidt visits Moscow will not depend, as SPD leader Willy Brandt, a man with less resilient nerves, maintains, on an Olympic boycott.

To resolve crises their causes must be cured, not their symptoms. If Mr Brezhnev does confer with Herr Schmidt he can be sure to be at the receiving end of some plain speaking.

The Chancellor is not a cold warrior but he is not given to standing to attention either — neither to Messrs Brezhnev or Carter nor to the views of his party, the Social Democrats. *Hans Schmitz*

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 19 April 1980)

■ TRADE

International oil marketing plan ready, but 'no need for drama yet'

There is no need to be over-dramatic about energy supplies now the Iranian crisis has come to a head, says Bonn government spokesman Armin Grünewald.

Dismissing rumours that the government planned to ration motor fuel and heating oil, he admitted that Bonn was increasingly concerned about energy supplies.

But the Economic Affairs Ministry reassuringly reported that emergency tanks held a larger than usual contingency reserve of oil to keep the country going if supplies were interrupted.

All over the world larger reserves of crude oil and refinery products have been built up than ever before. In West Germany reserves should last 120 days.

Oil companies reckon there is no real difficulty in getting hold of crude oil at present. But when supplies are short the price goes up. Had it not been for events in Iran this trend would have levelled off for a while.

They are reluctant to forecast the extent to which they might be able to offset a substantial shortfall, let alone a complete breakdown in supplies from Iran.

Last year Iranian oil made up 10.7 per cent of West Germany's oil consumption. In the first quarter of 1980 it accounted for nearly 15 per cent.

A shortfall of seven per cent or more would automatically trigger an international crisis plan providing for market controls. Similar contingency plans have been drawn up the event of sanctions against the Soviet Union.

West Germany relies on the Soviet Union for more than seven per cent of its oil supplies too when refinery products are taken into account as well as crude oil imports.

What, for that matter, about supplies from Libya? Saudi Arabia is Bonn's largest oil supplier. Libya comes a close second. Then come, on the basis of last year's figures, Nigeria, Britain and Iran.

Colonel Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, recently announced in a German TV interview that no country could be sure of always receiving supplies of Libyan oil. He continued to regard oil as a political weapon.

There was no question of supplies to West Germany being in any doubt at present, though, since relations between the two countries were good.

Crisis arrangements have been drafted by the International Energy Agency, Paris, and all major industrial countries except France have agreed to abide by them.

These contingency plans come into effect the moment any one country reports a shortfall of seven per cent or more. Then all member-countries must pool supplies, both imports and domestic production.

A wide range of precautions have been taken to ensure that pumps do not run dry in West Germany. Such ample supplies have been stockpiled that a shortfall of one third could be offset for a year without restrictions needing to be imposed.

But the government would not like to make immediate use of the 90-day stockpiles oil companies have been required to keep in hand. The Economic Affairs Ministry plans to offset a shortfall first by saving energy.

In keeping with Western contingency plans Bonn would impose a variety of restrictions on energy consumption. Administrative arrangements have been made for a three-stage plan, details of which were disclosed towards the end of 1979.

A fairly relaxed approach is envisaged in the event of a shortfall not exceeding 15 per cent. There will be appeals to save energy, speed limits and weekend driving bans.

Moves at this stage will be concentrated on pruning private consumption, making as few inroads as possible into industrial and commercial consumption.

Oil companies will set up a clearing house facility to cope with difficulties encountered by individual firms.

If this state of affirs lasts for any length of time, however, emergency stockpiles will need to be used, whereupon the next stage of the contingency plan will take effect.

Once the shortfall reaches between 15 and 30 per cent petrol, diesel and heating oil rationing will be introduced. Industrial and commercial users will again enjoy priority.

Industrial consumers would coordinate the use of naphtha as a petrochemical raw material. Coal and natural gas would be used in place of oil in power stations and for industrial heating.

At this stage too use would be made of the emergency stockpile.

Were the shortfall to exceed a third, the situation would resemble a war footing and a comprehensive range of restrictions would be imposed on all oil products and all consumers.

Measures to estimate supply and demand and enforce rationing are all based on the provisions of the Energy Safeguards Act, which empowers the Bonn government to take all necessary legal and administrative action.

By the terms of the Act ration coupons have been printed and supplied to local authorities since last year, while heating oil consumers are already advised to save their oil bills to back up their claim for supplies in the event of an emergency.

Purchases over the past two years are to be taken into account in determining ration allowances.

Bonn would much prefer not to have to put these plans into action but Dieter von Würzen, state secretary to the Economic Affairs Ministry, has reiterated that all energy consumers must do their bit to ensure that the country is no longer abjectly dependent on oil supplies.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 11 April 1980)

Tension might hit dealings with East bloc

Trade between West Germany ... the East bloc may well be ... tension between the United States ... the Soviet Union, DIW, the West ... economic research institute, forecasts.

The efficacy of economic sanctions against the Soviet Union must ... overrated, it claims. A number of ... tries in West Germany would be ... harder hit than Soviet industry ... whole.

Overall economic growth rates are expected to suffer in either country ... any great extent. All told, economic ... between the Soviet Union and ... Germany are of minor importance.

Imports in either direction ... for less than half a percentage point ... GNP. The employment effect of ... with the Soviet Union is also overe... the institute claims in its latest ... survey.

Sanctions would mainly affect ... manufacturers and mechanical engineering (capital investment goods).

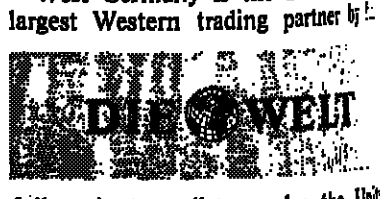
But sanctions could not be fully ... forced except, perhaps, in the mi... sector. Gaps could be plugged by ... rect supplies via non-aligned countries.

"So a reduction in exports to the Soviet Union seems unlikely to have ... lasting effect on Soviet economic growth," the survey concludes.

Trade with European members ... Comecon, the East bloc Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, was up 13 per cent last year to DM31bn, largely due to unusually high price rises.

This figure did not include ... German trade.

West Germany is the Soviet Union's largest Western trading partner ...



followed at a distance by the United States, France, Finland, Japan and Italy.

The main items supplied by West Germany are steel rolling mill equipment, steel pipelines, machine tools ... mining and motor manufacturing equipment.

In these sectors West Germany ... counts for between a fifth and a third ... Soviet imports. Russia mainly imports ... high-grade technology from West Germany.

In return it mainly supplies oil, ... and important raw materials. According to the Berlin research institute's figures West Germany imports 55 per cent ... its enriched uranium (457 tonnes ... year), 16 per cent of its natural gas and six per cent of its petroleum from the Soviet Union.

The percentage for palladium is ... for titanium 21, for cotton 18 and ... asbestos thirteen.

"These figures clearly indicate that despite a lower overall percentage of ... imports from the Soviet Union account for a much more important share in certain market sectors."

If increasing political play is ... with East-West trade DIW fears consequences for what it terms the ... expensive and so far safest source of ... material supplies West Germany has.

Both sides have an economic interest in maintaining trade, but at present ...

Continued on page 8

BUSINESS

Construction machine tycoon got his start with accidental meeting

Horst-Dieter Esch, 36, who has over the past five years built up the largest construction machine business in Europe, claims he doesn't believe in accumulating possessions.

"Too many possessions, says Esch, are dangerous, because they make you satisfied and inert."

Esch's deeds prove one thing at least: he is not yet satisfied: But is he really as uninterested in possessions as he claims? His meteoric career has given rise to astonishment, admiration — but also envy and distrust. He, or rather the company he controls, IBH Holding AG, Mainz, owns 11 companies which produce construction machines, employ ...00 people and have an annual turnover of DM1.2bn.

Why, if not out of desire for possessions, has Esch built up this company in such a short time? Why does he now want to start expanding in a big way by breaking into the North American market, as he announced after his last takeover four weeks ago?

If possession is not the motive — and the fact that Esch has long been able to lead a very comfortable life indeed according to most criteria indicates this — then there can only be one other reason: Esch wants to prove he is right, to show that his idea of a company specialising in construction machines only was right. Five years ago, Esch argued that medium-sized construction machines firms could not survive. They were too small, poorly managed, dependent on too many other products and would not survive a crisis.

Inside-out knowledge of the industry

Esch knew what he was talking about. He knew the construction industry inside out. And he came to the industry by accident.

In 1967 he flew back to Europe after a three-year business management course in the USA. Sitting next to him in the plane was Benno Kaltenegger, owner of the Hennef construction machine factory Duomat.

Kaltenegger, who often made decisions on the spur of the moment, was impressed by Esch and by the time the plane landed he had his first job: sales manager with for Kaltenegger at a monthly salary of DM3,000.

Esch proved a huge success as a salesman. After only a few months Kaltenegger's stores were empty: Esch had sold all the Duomat shock rollers.

He was promoted to director of the American sales branch, which Kaltenegger had founded with the big British construction machines company, John Blackwood Hodge. After two years, Duomat rollers dominated the American market. The British were impressed by the young man and made him European sales manager in 1973.

Esch returned the trust shown in him by buying DM100,000 of his employer's shares. The share value dwindled to only a quarter and Esch lost DM75,000.

However, he continued to believe in his employer's profit-making potential, borrowed DM400,000 from a Bochum bank and bought John Blackwood Hodge shares at DM1.50 a share. Six

DIE ZEIT

weeks later, these shares were worth DM6 and speculator Esch was a millionaire.

Blackwood Hodge lost its star salesman. He set up on his own, founding the IBH Holding AG with his first million in 1975. He got another million from the Swiss company Builma Investment Holding, backed by British businessmen he had worked with during his Hodge days.

Now Esch could get down to business. The construction industry crisis brought one company after another to the verge of bankruptcy, just as Esch had predicted.

Within three months, he bought up three factories. For one company, that of his former employer Kaltenegger, he paid DM700,000. And he bought the roller producers Zettelmayer and Hamm for next to nothing. The owners and their creditors were only to glad to be rid of the companies.

Esch recalls: "The IBH could only have come into being during these three months. It would not have been possible before or after."

As when he met Keltenegger and in his share speculation, Esch had seen lucky — he had been in the right place at the right time. In 1976 Esch also took over the Lanz construction machine factory and a year later the company of Baljer and Zembrod, both for nothing, of course.

All these companies produced quality machines and had excellent reputations. Their production programmes complemented one another perfectly. Hardly two years after setting up on his own, Esch had built up a construction machines concern.

With skill and toughness and the help of the building boom, he put all these companies back on their feet again. He did not want to rely on the previous owners and their managers. He fired them, almost without exception.

Esch could have slowed down the pace, been content with what he had achieved. In 1978 there was indeed a kind of pause — he did not take over any more companies. But in 1979 he expanded further, buying the French construction machine producers Deruppé, Maco-Mendon and Pingon.

The three companies were losing money but belonged to large concerns and so could not go bankrupt. Esch exploited the situation in familiar style, buying them up for next to nothing.

In 1978 he announced plans to move into the English market — and this proved expensive. He paid DM14m for Hymac Ltd., a company with 1,400 workers producing hydraulic excavators and excavator loaders. The major Hymac shareholder, the respected Powell Duffryn company, in return bought IBH shares at a nominal value of DM2m but at an issue price of an incredible 1,100 per cent this meant they had to pay DM22m to IBH Holding.

Esch needed the money. A short time later he bought Hanomag, a subsidiary of the Canadian company Massey-Ferguson, for DM30m. Hanomag, based in Esch's home town of Hanover, was in trouble, but Esch denies that sentimentality played any part in his buying it.

What made him buy was the excellent reputation enjoyed by Hanomag tractors, excavators and wheel-loaders, and the excellent sales outlets.

Hanomag is the biggest company IBH Holding AG has taken over so far. It has 2,700 on its payroll and an annual turnover of DM400m. However, in the past two years, the company has lost DM160m.

If Esch can make Hanomag profitable again, IBH will definitely be here to stay. Esch describes the figures for the first quarter of 1980 as "fantastic."

His most recent takeover pleased him oven more than the initial success at Hanomag. On 1 April he bought 83.33 per cent of the shares of the Wibau Hartmann AG from the Hamburg merchant bank of Schröder, Münchmeyer, Hengst und Co. (SMH).

It has not been officially confirmed that Esch paid nothing for the shares but it almost goes without saying. So far one member of the Hartmann board and some managers have resigned — a familiar feature of Esch takeovers.

Outsiders were surprised, however, that SMH, one of the country's leading merchant bankers, have also bought shares in IBH Holding AG. They bought 7.4 per cent of IBH shares at a nominal value of DM750.000 — but at an amazing issue price of 2.000 per cent this meant they actually paid DM15m.

It must have been a dream come true for Esch now that he could boast a shareholder virtually embodying solidity, reliability and a sterling reputation — qualities with which outsiders are rarely credited.

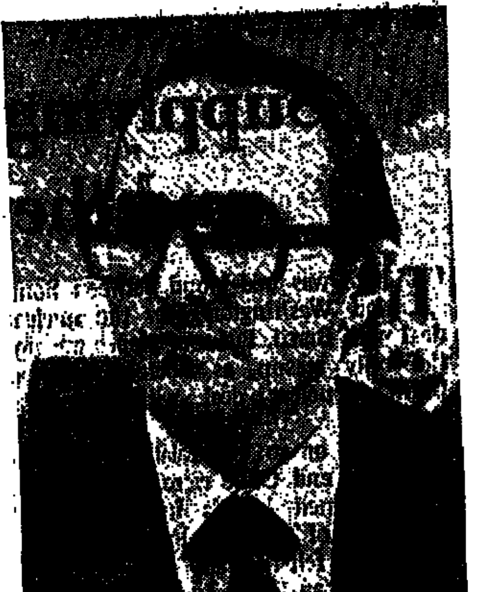
Count Ferdinand von Galen, a personally liable shareholder in SMH, justified his bank's investment by pointing out that IBH had always made profits. And he considers Esch "a very able man." Esch has long been of this opinion. He wants to make Galen the "biggest private banker in Europe." Esch's exuberance at his latest coup cannot be explained by the financial aspect alone. Of course Esch hopes that with someone of Graf Galen's standing on the board there will at last be an end to the suspicions and doubts.

Many draw parallel with another sudden rise

The sudden rise of Horst-Dieter Esch has, many believe, a lot in common with that of Hans Glöggler, who went bankrupt with his hastily put-together textiles concern.

Others quote the case of the British asset-stripper Jim Slater, who bought up and then "plundered" companies. Esch occasionally played backgammon with Jim Slater.

However, Esch vehemently denies that he is a bit of a gambler. One night he won DM20,000 at backgammon and gave it to his wife to console her for his frequent absences, but he does not regard backgammon as a game of



Horst-Dieter Esch (Photo: Hanomag)

chance and he would not stake a penny in a game like roulette.

No doubt Esch will for some time be haunted by the comparisons with Glöggler and Slater. He prefers to be compared with steel boss Willy Korf or computer constructor Heinz Nixdorf, both of whom had similarly meteoric climbs to fame.

But Esch finds it difficult to gain the trust of the public. He has more success with his employees. The works council at Zettelmeyer, the first company he took over, gave him a standing ovation at the last works assembly. And at Hymac in England, his workers fought pickets to get to work. "And I'll soon have the workers behind me at Hanomag" says Esch.

More success with staff than with public

It is apparent that Esch is looking for trust when he talks of his plans to take on the big American construction machine companies and the Japanese giant Komatsu. When Esch is explaining his ideas, he cannot sit still.

He goes up to his interlocutor, produces tables and brochures, sells his ideas and himself. There is no trace of the coldness he has been accused of. A manager he sacked put it poetically: "A deep freezer is a radiator compared to Esch."

One thing Esch has plenty of is self-confidence. He believes he could put the ailing giant electric concern AEG back on its feet. But for the time being he must be content with being Mr Big at IBH.

He only holds 23.2 per cent of the shares but has over 76.9 per cent of the voting rights. All IBH shareholders — except for Powell Duffryn, which has 23.2 per cent of shares — transfer their voting rights to Esch, "for life", as he says.

Esch does not find this at all unusual. "It is the most logical possible thing. If I want to buy a company in America and my shareholders tell me not to my whole plans will be ruined. Then I may as well pack up and go home." Graf Galen also approved of "the company founder remaining master in his own house."

IBH shareholders are certainly in for surprises. Over Easter Esch went off on a business trip to the USA. Asked whether he had bought a company as part of his plan to conquer the US market, Esch answered laconically: "Whenever I go off on business, something is bought or sold."

Peter Christ

(Die Zeit, 11 April 1980)

■ NUCLEAR ENERGY

Supplying the wherewithal overseas, and thereby creating a dilemma

There was bad blood between Bonn and Washington over the nuclear deal with Brazil. But sour grapes was not the only reason, as a closer look at Bonn's nuclear deal with Argentina shows.

A year or so ago relations between Argentina and Chile were at a low ebb. Both claimed islands in storm-tossed seas south of Tierra del Fuego where oil-fields were felt to exist.

Argentinian leader Jorge Videla threatened to press his finger on the nuclear trigger, whereupon Chilean leader Augusto Pinochet grudgingly conceded the disputed islands to his Andean neighbour.

Well, he didn't really, of course, but this scenario might well have happened if General Videla had succeeded in developing an Argentinian nuclear device and been unscrupulous enough to use it.

In point of fact the two dictators had sufficient common sense to accept arbitration by the Vatican, in much the same way as Alexander VI, the Borgia Pope, shared out the spoils of the New World between Spain and Portugal in 1493.

Yet the spectre of nuclear war between Argentina and Chile is more than a bad dream. Nuclear pundits are convinced Argentina could by now be the owner of its own nuclear warheads if it had only wanted to go ahead with development.

Ignorance or hypocrisy are thus the only possible explanation for the dispute over whether or not Kraftwerk Union, a Siemens subsidiary, should be allowed to supply the Argentinian dictator with a second reactor for Atucha nuclear power station.

Criticism has nonetheless been voiced in anticipation of the go-ahead from the Bonn Cabinet. Members of the Social Democratic parliamentary party are deeply unhappy about the deal.

Brigitte Erler, an SPD member of the Bundestag scientific research committee, has warned that Bonn may be providing Buenos Aires with the wherewithal to build an atomic bomb.

She conceded that no supplier of nuclear installations could undertake technical measures to ensure that the recipient used them solely for peaceful purposes.

But that was clearly not the main reason why she objected to the deal. What upset her more was that Argentina is governed by a military junta.

If Argentina could only be prevented for a number of years from gaining access to sufficient nuclear know-how to build the bomb, she argued, the junta would at least not be shored up by Bonn.

Indeed, Bonn could be instrumental in forestalling a power realignment in Latin America that might well assume crisis proportions.

Argentina is both a threshold country credited with sufficient nuclear know-how to build an atomic bomb and a non-signatory of the 1968 nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Since the Argentinian government is not answerable to parliamentary controls it is hardly surprising that warnings have been sounded.

India too was once a threshold country and non-signatory of the non-proliferation treaty but has now joined the nuclear club by virtue of fissile material siphoned off from the production line of a research reactor supplied by Canada.

Atucha I is a 340-megawatt nuclear power station designed and built by Kraftwerk Union in Argentina. It runs on untreated uranium and has been in operation since 1974.

Experts reckon that spent nuclear fuel rods probably contain up to 100 kg of plutonium a year, and plutonium can be separated from uranium by chemical processes with which advanced developing countries should be conversant.

So Argentina could well have stockpiled and separated enough plutonium from the nuclear waste it has accumulated since 1974 to build several atomic bombs.

Separating lethal plutonium, with an atomic weight of 239, from uranium 238 is relatively easy. Separating fissile uranium 235 from non-fissile uranium 238 is much more difficult.

Uranium 235 and uranium 238 are chemically identical isotopes and differ solely in physical terms. They can only be separated by means of extremely expensive physical processes.

This requires some such unit as a gas centrifuge that is capable of exploiting *the slight difference between their atomic weights.*

Argentina resolved to build a nuclear power station using natural uranium fuel since it had its own uranium deposits and was not dependent on supplies of enriched uranium from the great powers.

As a coolant and in order to keep fission in check Atucha I relies on deuterium, or heavy water. So will Embalse, a 600-megawatt power due for completion in 1982 with Canadian technical assistance.

Argentina imports its deuterium from the United States and Canada, but in mid-March Buenos Aires reached agreement with a Swiss company on a plant to supply 250 tonnes of heavy water a year.

This would make Argentina both no longer dependent on the United States and Canada as deuterium suppliers and able to build or commission a new 700-megawatt natural uranium nuclear power station every three or four years.

Shortly before the Swiss contract was signed an article in the *New York Times* claimed Argentina could use its heavy water installation to build an atomic bomb.

In fact Argentina will not be any less dependent on deuterium imports for at least six years until its heavy water plant is in operation.

Besides, that will not ensure it a nuclear potential either. That Argentina already has, albeit to a lesser present extent.

Canada failed in its bid to secure the contracts for both Atucha II and the heavy water plant even though, in the 700-megawatt power station's case, it underbid Kraftwerk Union by $400m.

So criticism of Argentina's nuclear development programme can be seen in another light. The United States and Canada also strongly objected to the nuclear deal between Bonn and Brazil, allegedly because the contract was not awarded to US firms.

Yet criticism from the United States and Canada must not be dismissed solely as sour grapes. Both Germany and Switzerland must face the music on the main argument advanced by their critics.

It is that by delivering the goods to Argentina they are enabling another threshold power to join the nuclear club, especially as Argentina is a non-signatory of the non-proliferation treaty and may reasonably be suspected of harbouring nuclear ambitions.

But a number of industrialised countries that are not members of the nuclear club also had grave misgivings about the non-proliferation treaty. They were worried ratification would hamper the peaceful use of atomic energy.

Bonn was one such objector, and this view is shared by many developing countries that are also quick to suspect the nuclear haves of a desire to limit their sovereignty.

Ever since the first Indian nuclear device was exploded in May 1974, four years after the non-proliferation treaty came into force, suppliers of sensitive equipment have invariably insisted on assurances by their customers that it will only be used for peaceful purposes.

These assurances are as binding legally as the non-proliferation treaty, and in the case of Atucha II Argentina is quite prepared to give them and to reach agreement on inspection procedures with the International Atomic Energy Authority in Vienna.

Bonn claims Argentina has accepted the controls on which it insists. Details are not yet available, but since they reportedly tally with IAEA provisions it seems fairly certain they do not go as far as the United States would like.

Washington wants inspection of nuclear capacity independently developed and built by Argentina too.

One might, of course, argue that paper is easily signed and that dictators do not enjoy much of a [illegible] worrying too much about [illegible] of this kind.

This is true, but parties [illegible] proliferation treaty can just [illegible] regard their treaty obligations [illegible] no copper-bottomed guarantee [illegible] countries will stand by their [illegible]ments.

This is a risk that must be [illegible] alternative (if there is one) [illegible] risk of excluding the poorer [illegible] the world from developments [illegible] a modicum of prosperity.

What is more, developing [illegible] without oil reserves of their [illegible] been particularly hard hit by [illegible] rises and are thus more depe[illegible] others on some substitute or a[illegible]

Argentina does have oil [illegible] serves of its own but in decade[illegible] will be in this position too. [illegible] however, it is more than [illegible] self-supporting in oil and gas.

Experts agree that there is [illegible] preventing the number of nuc[illegible] from increasingly. In the past [illegible] been argued that great powers [illegible] more careful in their use of [illegible] small fry. Since Afghanistan [illegible] has again seemed dubious to [illegible] least.

So the 700-megawatt nuclear [illegible] reactor KWU is under contract [illegible] ply Argentina with would not [illegible] Buenos Aires with nuclear [illegible] does not already have, in quality [illegible] in quantity.

Whether Bonn ought to risk [illegible] clashes with the United States [illegible] gentina's account is, of course, [illegible] matter. There are arguably enough [illegible] putes with Washington as it is.

Yet another is whether it is [illegible] stymie another overseas nuclear [illegible] when the domestic construction [illegible] already hit West German nuclear [illegible] try hard.

Jobs are equally threatened [illegible] mothballing of two Kraftwerk U[illegible] actors in Iran on which construct[illegible] brought to a halt by that country's [illegible] mic revolution.

The unfinished ruins of the[illegible] nuclear power stations are now [illegible] sore on the Persian Gulf and a [illegible] ny to an investment in West G[illegible] nuclear technology that one count[illegible] already seen fit to write off.

Josef [illegible]

(Rheinischer Merkur, Christ [illegible] 11 April [illegible])

Dealings with East bloc

Continued from page 6

litical tension looks like taking pride of place over economic considerations.

This tension cannot fail to affect the other Comecon countries' plans for trade with the West too, it is noted. Trade with the East has stagnated since 1976 and an opportunity of boosting it looks like being missed.

The Comecon countries are currently drafting five-year plans for 1981 to 1985, so now would be the time to step up trade, but DIW does not expect growth rates to be as high as in the early 70s where West Germany is concerned.

Yet overall conditions have taken a turn for the better, since East bloc countries are now running at less of a deficit in trade with West Germany. So economic leeway for an increase in trade is there for the asking.

Peter Weertz

(Die Welt, 10 April 1980)

New horizon

Continued from page 3

than detente, with a mixture of [illegible] and suspicion.

GDR politicians occasionally [illegible] how happy they would be if their [illegible] ist brothers could be convinced [illegible] entire East Bloc can only benefit [illegible] smooth relations between Bonn [illegible] Berlin.

The Bonn Government is in [illegible] similar position. True, the Am[illegible] have said that only the Soviet [illegible] and not the other East Bloc co[illegible] will be affected by trade restriction[illegible] boycotts. but a demonstrative [illegible] of economic relations between the [illegible] German states would not be appr[illegible] by US public opinion.

So the Bonn talks between G[illegible] Mittag, Minister of Economic A[illegible] Lambsdorff and Chancellor Schmidt [illegible] be more of a sounding out with [illegible] assurances of good will. Spectacular [illegible] sults are unlikely.

Both sides will have to wait and [illegible] how East-West relations develop [illegible] coming momths.

Joachim N[illegible]

(Die Zeit, 18 April [illegible])

■ THE MOTOR INDUSTRY

European manufacturers worried at potential of Japanese

European motor manufacturers are worried about competition from Japan.

Toyota, Nissan (Datsun), Mitsubishi, Toyo Kogyo (Mazda), Honda and Fuji Heavy Industries (Subaru) have made their mark on European markets.

Europe may have seen the birth of the automobile nearly a century ago. It may have lent Japan a crucial helping hand when it embarked on its modernisation during the Meiji era.

But the boot is now on the other foot. Japan has for some time been the world's major car exporter. This year it exports to outstrip the ailing US motor industry in unit production.

This would make Japan the world's No. 1 motor manufacturer, but it is evidently not enough. Japan seems determined to expand production capacity for private cars.

Yet Japan is no newcomer to European motor markets, so why there should be such a song and dance at this stage?

Its share of the European market is a mere 7½ per cent in any case, partly because several EEC countires, especially France and Italy, have been determined to keep Japanese cars out.

Despite this, motor manufacturers are still crying about Japanese competition. Leading manufacturers, particularly Giovanni Agnelli of Fiat, are lamenting in Brussels about the "Yellow Peril."

So they are more worried than the present state of the market would appear to warrant.

European self-assurance is still sufficient for them to feel more than a match for Japan in technology, though to judge by the rapid progress in Japanese design this is no longer the certainty it might once have been.

But the industrial power and the unbounden determination to export shown by the major Japanese manufacturers are increasingly causing upset and anxiety.

Recent developments have played a leading role in fostering this spirit of dejection. The productivity edge Japanese manufacturers enjoy over their European counterparts has if anything increased, for instance.

A car worker in Toyota City, say, puts in on average 20 per cent more hours than his opposite number in Rüsselsheim (Opel) or Stuttgart (Mercedes) per year.

What is more, he works more effectively, not only because he is more dedicated in his approach to his job but also because he is backed up by a more up-to-date and more automated production apparatus.

Last year a special additional factor was the decline in the exchange rate of the yen against the deutschemark, which further improved the competitiveness of Japanese exporters.

European manufacturers have little to set against these advantages, with the result that Japan has gained ground in the West German market, largely at the expense of competition from other EEC countries.

By February 1980 Japan's total share of the West German market reached 7.9 per cent, and it was panic stations all round when Honda held cooperation talks with British Leyland and Nissan with Alfa Romeo.

This Japanese bid to gain a foothold in leading European companies unleashed a previously suppressed desire to resist what was felt to be the outline of a new strategy.

Prospects for the future are what worry European manufacturers most. What happens in the United States will, of course, play a leading role.

If US auto workers and their trade unions step up pressure on Washington to impose import restrictions on Japanese motor vehicles, frustrated exports to the United States will surely be redirected to Europe.

Japanese manufacturers must make sure at all costs that their capacities are fully used and that they do their national duty as employers and foreign exchange earners.

Their attention will be directed first and foremost at the West German market with its unlimited access, and the signs are fair for a marketing offensive.

Japanese companies have modernised their private car ranges, and as they have been relieved by the yen exchange rate of the need to impose price increases they are currently more competitive than ever, especially after the latest round of price increases for locally-manufactured cars.

Even if there is no change in the United States, Japanese makes will surely account for about 10 per cent of West German sales between them by the end of the year.

Export prospects for other EEC countries will be correspondingly poor, which is why the French and Italians in particular are keen to discuss Common Market quotas for Japanese cars.

What, then, about the West German industry?

Domestic manufacturers have so far manfully upheld the banner of free trade, as well they might given the reliance of West German motor manufacturers on export sales.

This is the only logical and consistent approach they can take, and on this point West German and Japanese manufacturers' interests tally.

There can nonetheless be no mistaking an increasing tendency to protest on the part of European manufacturers.

Their lament is that West German motor manufacturers are benefiting on export markets from the import restrictions imposed on Japanese cars in neighbouring EEC countries.

Protectionism would thus seem to be on the cards. Logically the next step must be a call for restrictions on imports from other EEC countries, which would put paid to the Common Market.

Differences of opinion on Common Agricultural Policy might have failed to end the European Community but the car war would have succeeded.

Things have fortunately not yet reached this stage. At present the European Community has no way of intervening against the Japanese.

And although a pincer movement seems to be closing in on the one-time root-and-branch free marketeers in West Germany, for the time being they can rely on the Liberal Economic Affairs Minister in Bonn.

Whether motor manufacturers will retain this common sense in the long run (and allow their association to advocate it) is another matter.

At the moment they would prefer to see the Japanese accept self-imposed restrictions on exports to Europe.

But is the Japanese government strong enough to oblige Japanese manufacturers to accept equal cuts in output? Or will they be back at each other's throats in next to no time?

Maybe not, but whatever happens an epidemic of automotive protectionism would be the worst possible outcome. It must be firmly nipped in the bud.

Gerold Lingnau

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 14 April 1980)

Small models pay off for Volkswagen

The West German motor industry seems caught between high petrol prices and short-time working on the one hand and overtime and long waits for delivery on the other.

Volkswagen, riding high on a wave of demand for money-saving compact models, plan to work six special shifts between now and the works holidays this summer.

Opel, the Frankfurt General Motors subsidiary, and Ford of Cologne, continue to run on short time.

Opel laid off staff for a week in mid-April in Rüsselsheim and Kaiserslautern. It was the sixth stoppage of its kind since last autumn.

Ford have slowed down production periodically since October. Between now and the end of June they have notified the labour exchange of plans to work short time on 12 days.

The Opel Rekord, previously the best-selling family saloon in the 1.6 to two-litre class, took a sales plummet of 14 per cent in January and February.

Sales of Ford Capris and Granadas were down more than 20 per cent on last year, and the US subsidiaries had too little too late to offer in front-wheel drive compacts.

The new Opel Kadett was not unveiled until autumn 1979, and although demand is brisk, production capacity cannot keep pace with it, so there is still a waiting list several months long.

The Kadett runs off the Bochum assembly lines and Opel spokesman H. P. Clauss explains:

"We have even taken to offering Rüsselsheim staff removal grants to get them to help out for a while at Bochum."

Ford's only entrant in the compact boom is the Fiesta, at the lower end of the model range. The Escort is not a patch on competitors in its range technically.

A successor to the Escort is due to appear this autumn. The newcomer has been tentatively dubbed the Erika by the Cologne works.

Ford and Opel seem to have been resting on their laurels, and the reaction now they have been caught napping is one of either "I told you so" or of trenchant criticism.

Ford and General Motors have trouble enough in the United States and have arguably run their German subsidiaries for all the profit they can milk from them of late.

Having failed to keep pace with model changes they are now passing the buck to the social security system that pays workers broken time for shifts during which they are officially laid off, competitors claim.

But they are by no means alone in going into the red at the upper end of the model range during the first two months of 1980.

Nearly 40 per cent fewer large Audis were sold by the corresponding Volkswagen division in January and February, while the Peugeot 504 sold at less than half last year's pace.

As demand changed, importers reckoned they stood a chance of improving their position. Renault of France, who are level-pegging with Volkswagen-Audi in European markets, are already complaining they cannot keep up with demand for the R5.

This year they intend to sell 150,000 cars in West Germany, including 40 per cent R5s and improving their slice of the cake from 4½ to 5½ per cent.

Peugeot, Citroen and Talbot also want to secure their share of the West German compact market. So do Fiat and the Japanese.

The Japanese, who at last year's Frankfurt motor show were still pooh-poohed by the others, will soon command a 9-per-cent share of the market.

European manufacturers have evidently yet to hit on a valid concept to stop the Japanese, who keep on coming with attractive models at steadily less expensive prices.

Since the beginning of 1979 the exchange rate of the yen has declined 20 per cent against the deutschemark, so the Japanese can afford to equip standard models with many extras and still hold their prices, at least in yen.

All in all the situation looks less dramatic than might have been feared early in the New Year. Sales are increasing in most European markets, including a February record 221,000 new registrations of private cars in West Germany.

In January the Motor Manufacturers Association, Frankfurt, forecast a 9-per-cent decline in production this year. Domestic sales were expected to decline by 300,000 to 2,300,000 units.

The association is still cautious despite optimistic forecasts by individual manufacturers. It wants to wait and see whether sales will level out at the February total or backslide because the February figure was a freak caused by advance orders.

Market capacity is less disputed than estimated demand for family saloons, however. Renault expect the 1.6 to two-litre class to steadily decline in importance; not so Ford and Opel.

"Despite high fuel prices there are no signs of motorists switching to smaller models," an Opel spokesman comments.

"All there can be said to have been is a trend towards not moving up to a larger model."

Daimler-Benz are unruffled by any idea there might be a shortage or prospective buyers for larger models. They have already sold out their complete year's output for 1980.

dpa

(Bremer Nachrichten, 11 April 1980)

■ THE ARTS

Film director finally gets his recognition

Werner Schroeter has been directing films for 12 years — operatically stylised films such as Erika Katappa and mannered comedies such as 'Der Bomberpilot'. Schroeter, born in Gotha in 1945, only became known to a wider public when his unusually naturalistic narrative film 'Neapolitan Sisters' was screened. The "exotic outsider of the German cinema" produced most of his films for the ZDF, the Second German TV Channel. His older works have rarely been shown in cinemas. Hans-Heinz Schwarz, of the Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, here interviews Schroeter.

Q.: Werner Schroeter, last year you were awarded the National Film Prize for your film *Neapolitan Sisters* and you recently won the Golden Bear Award at the Berlin Festival for *Palermo or Wolfsburg*. Have money and fame not come too late?

Schroeter: There was no money with either prize. Of course I have deserved a major prize for some time, but better late than never.

Q.: Wasn't the Berlin Golden Bear award a compromise, especially as you had to share it with the American film *Heartland?*

Schroeter: They did not share the prize, they awarded two prizes. But I assume the other film had to get the award because of behind-the-scenes pressure, to ensure that American films would go on being shown at the festival.

Q.: Since the prize award, you have had huge *publicity. Doesn't it* bother *you that you have spent years as an outsider and now suddenly so much is being written and said about you?*

Schroeter: No, it doesn't bother me, as long as people do not write too much. You can ride a name to death if you write too much about it. The problem is also that there are so few people who can really get to grips with a personality. The few things I have written — such as the tribute to Maria Callas — were tremendously hard work, but I enjoyed doing them. But I think one has to take a lot of time.

Q.: The response to *Palermo or Wolfsburg* was on the whole positive. Do you get annoyed about bad reviews?

Schroeter: No, I don't sulk just because people don't rave about me.

Q.: Your two most recent films have been very different from your previous work. Could it be that the new socio-political aspect is the key to your belated success on the one hand and the misunderstandings on the other?

Schroeter: If you look closely at my work over the past eleven years, you will see that I have always tended to do new and different things. There is a huge difference for example between Eika Katappa and Salome.

Q.: How did you come to make *Wolfsburg or Palermo?*

Schroeter: It began with a newspaper article I read which moved me very much at the time. I didn't really want to make another film on Italy after *Neapolitan Sisters* but my friend persuaded me to do this.

Q.: Why does the German part take place in Wolfsburg of all places?

Schroeter: I think Wolfsburg is an extreme example of an uninhabitable environment, a town based on nothing but industry.

Q.: Do you not think that the way you represent a young Sicilian's experience of Germany is unusually crude, one-dimensional and even flat?

Schroeter: That's the way I wanted it to be. It is a controversial film and so it has to contain platitudes, too. There are scenes in it I find excruciating myself but I deliberately left them in, because there is a truth in this flatness. I even took out more romantic scenes so that they could stay in. I don't care whether people think I've made a flat film or a perfect film.

Q.: Do you think that many people enjoyed the provocative parts in your film because they would not dare to be so direct themselves?

Schroeter: I consider it important to behave eccentrically and extremely, to encourage people to do the same. If I, as an artist with pretentions to a public audience, do not do it, who is going to do it? Of course I want to encourage other people — or make them less afraid.

Q.: The Stalinist beginning is not exactly shown as a folkloristic paradise in the sun, is it?

Schroeter: Palma di Montechiaro is not a place where people go for their holidays, it is too kaputt for that. But it has its poetry, because you can communicate with the people there. True, they are aggressive towards foreigners — and I had to fight this at the beginning — but later we got a lot out of them. They confided many things in me which I later put into the film.

Q.: Did you already have a script?

Schroeter: After looking at the location, I wrote the script with Giuseppe Fava. But we ended up not using it when we made the film because there were constantly new things happening during filming which gave us a new perspective on things.

Q.: So you allow your lay actors to influence you, react spontaneously to what they come up with?

Schroeter: Yes, completely. It turned out that we changed almost everything with the actors. I have always done this, by the way. We advertised for actors in the papers. We did events in schools and churches with them, let them play little sketches to see how they reacted. Most of them, the village priest and the landowner, for example, acted as themselves. Most of them really enjoyed it.

Q.: I have heard that stage actors also enjoy working with you.

Schroeter: In Käthchen von Heilbronn in Bochum I gave the actors the responsibility for the play. I tried to wean them from the fears and anxieties all actors have, because they have to give the audience a perfect performance. I even walked around on the stage myself during the performance. It was nice work — and very extreme, from the formal point of view.

Q.: What made you choose Käthchen?

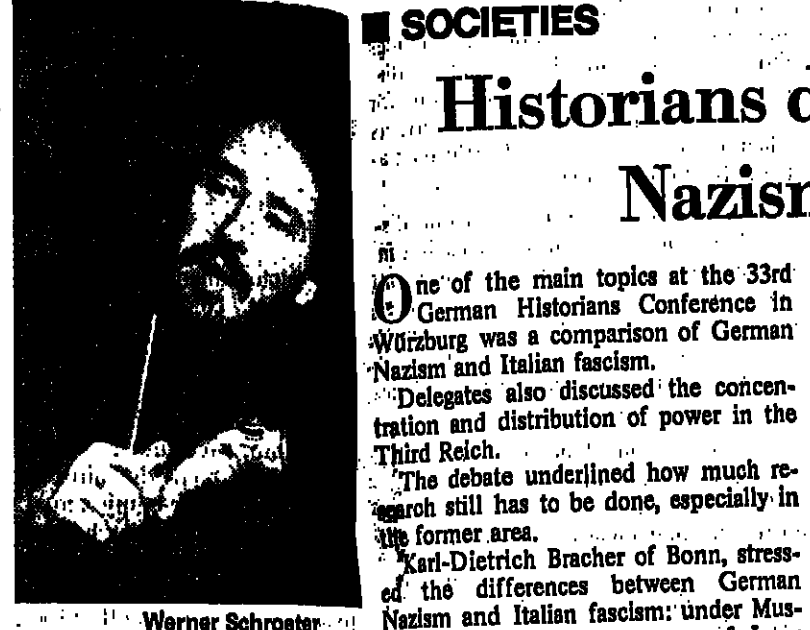
Schroeter: Apart from Lohengrin, I have only done plays with women in the main part. Käthchen was maybe the last piece in the jigsaw, as the expression of a certain relation among people. I find the play much crazier than you'd think the way it is normally acted. The absolute unconditional way she trots after the man. The inner strength, although he tortures her sadistically. This is the way I interpret the text. I see him as being afraid of her. This is the way people behave in real life and can be presented as such in contemporary terms.

Q.: Don't you ever find that stage directing interferes with your film work?

Schroeter: No. People used to say that my films were theatrical and operatic but in the theatre my work was filmic. Käthchen von Heilbronn was one of my best works — in the theatre or in film. It was a very satisfying work.

Q.: All the works you have directed are characterised by your special interest in music.

Schroeter: I like all music, especially when it is harmonious. Music without harmonies is fascistic.


Werner Schroeter
(Photo: Digne Meller-Marcovicz)

Q.: You directed a show in Paris with Ingrid Caven.

Schroeter: Yes, she's doing a tour of Germany with this show now. We want to do a kind of circus here with artists and animals.

Q.: You will soon be directing Mozart's Don Giovanni in Kassel. Have you seen the film version by Losey and Liebermann?

Schroeter: No, but I have seen pictures, and that was enough.

Q.: Going back to Palermo or Wolfsburg. The film lasts three hours. Isn't the time you devote to characters and situations too much for the filmgoer?

Schroeter: I don't make bitty films. The film originally lasted seven hours, so I have left out a lot as it is. I thought: it doesn't bore me, it won't bore others.

Q.: Are you planning a new film?

Schroeter: No. At the moment I've got enough to do.

Q.: Wouldn't you like to direct in Cologne some time?

Schroeter: Yes, I would, but no one has asked me yet.

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 9 April 1980)

Weiss's play unleashes controversy

The *Freie Volksbühne*, Berlin, has recently produced Peter Weiss's *The Investigation* — and unleashed a fierce controversy in the process.

The play deals, among other things, with Auschwitz.

No one is more aware of the controversial nature of the play than Kurt Hübner, who, over loudspeakers, personally welcomes the audience to "this fiercely controversial production of Peter Weiss's Oratorium in 11 Songs — *The Investigation*."

This on top of a lengthy statement by Hübner on the play which is prominently displayed in the foyer.

Certainly no one can accuse Hübner of false modesty.

The Berlin theatre world is raging over an event which in reality is hardly an event at all. There is a grotesque disproportion between the importance of the issue and the amount of steam being let off about it.

When the *Freie Volksbühne* premiered Thomas Schulte-Michels' production of *The Investigation*, there was little excitement. It was generally regarded as a stop-gap production because the *Freie Volksbühne* had dropped its plans to world-premiere Rolf Hochhuth's play, *Lawyers*.

Director Schulte-Michels' had the provocative idea of locating Weiss's documentary drama about the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial in a seedy bar. Judges, witnesses and accused are played by nasty demi-monde entertainers in pale make-up. The applause for this version was only moderate, a few hesitant boos were heard. Perplexity at a stop-gap production.

Then all hell broke loose and we were treated to what is known in this country as a "moral debate." Some of the audience were appalled. Friedrich Luft, doyen of German theatre critics, and Günter Grack, expressed their abomination of this "stupid and culpable enterprise."

Loudest to condemn was Heinz Galinski, chairman of the West Berlin Jewish community, who immediately demanded that the production be dropped without even knowing the obscure object of his indignation (i.e. without having seen the play.)

The sequel to all this was utterly predictable, precisely following the eternal scenarios of scandals and so-called scandals. One side called for the censor and the other immediately felt obliged to defend the freedom of art, to stave off any form of censorship.

The decriers called the production an insult to the victims of Auschwitz. Sympathisers retorted that the production was a savage attack on our indifference and dishonesty in the face of Auschwitz.

Weiss also stated his view, obviously a very reasonable one: "I can imagine a different production of the play but, according to what I know, this version is appropriate to our time. You have my complete confidence. There can be no question of dropping the play."

The fact that author Weiss, like Galinski, has not even seen the play, is typical of the whole controversy. It is possible to have a grand old argument about this play even if one has not seen it. Those who have seen it prefer to hold their peace. The drift of this interpretation soon becomes clear and can be paraphrased thus: we, the survivors, are the voyeurs of horror, our morality is, in truth, lust. The production is poor and has no apparent point other than that of providing material for an illusory controversy.

Schulte-Michels' version could be interpreted maliciously as a typical product of a provincial theatre, attempting to cause a sensation with a powerful image because it knows it could not do so with more subtle, more differentiated, images. But there is also a more generous interpretation according to which the Berlin version of *The Investigation* is a desperate

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■ SOCIETIES

Historians debate differences between Nazism and Italian fascism

One of the main topics at the 33rd German Historians Conference in Würzburg was a comparison of German Nazism and Italian fascism.

Delegates also discussed the concentration and distribution of power in the Third Reich.

The debate underlined how much research still has to be done, especially in the former area.

Karl-Dietrich Bracher of Bonn, stressed the differences between German Nazism and Italian fascism: under Mussolini there was no massacre of Jews; the state was not absorbed by the party; apart from the fascists, there were other traditional power groups. In general, he argued, there was greater tolerance.

There was a clear generation gap between younger and older German historians on the question of who really held power within the Nazi State. The older generation (Andreas Hilgruber of Cologne, Eberhard Jäckel of Stuttgart and Karl-Dietrich Bracher of Bonn) argued that Hitler was the sole ruler and this was a major factor why the Nazi state was different from fascism under Mussolini.

The younger generation (Wolfgang Schneider of Trier and Hans Mommsen of Bochum) argued that Hitler was in fact dependent on the power groups who supported him and that the power of the party and state apparatus was greater than is often supposed.

This controversy underlined the need for a comprehensive analysis of the mechanisms of decision-making in the Third Reich.

There was general agreement that national socialism had unintentionally modernised some aspects of German society. Although Nazi ideology was economically and socially backwards-looking, anti-democratic and lacking a socio-political concept, its *Gleichschaltung* (bringing into line) removed traditional social barriers in German society, thus creating one of the conditions for democratisation after 1945.

Another unintentional achievement of Nazism was that the defeat meant the destruction of the old class society — especially that of the East Prussian landowners.

The overall theme of the conference was the Rise and Fall of World Empires — a subject of considerable interest in these days of the break-up of traditional power constellations.

World empires as such, i.e. empires embracing the entire known world, only existed of course in antiquity, according to the contentually and formally rather sketchy lecture by Alfred Heuss of Göttingen. The ancient Egyptians and thousands of years later the Chinese believed that they ruled the entire world.

Alexander the Great was an ideologist of world power but the Romans were not, although they ruled the entire known world. They were forced to go on extending their frontiers to defend power positions they already held.

Josef Fleckenstein of Göttingen then discussed the basic problem of the interrelation between power abroad and circumstances at home, concentrating on the Frankish empire.

Church and state helped bring about the fusion of the Germanic conquerors and the Gallo-Roman natives with the

Hannoversche Allgemeine

result that the Franks, unlike the Goths and the Vandals, did not then disappear from the historical scene but laid the foundations for the West Europe of today. The Frankish state was also a world empire in that, at the height of its power, it regarded itself as identical with Catholic Christendom.

Klaus Zernack, of Giessen, read a paper on Sweden in the 17th century — like the British Empire a case of a world power declining because it had pushed its frontiers too far. Sweden, to counter Danish hegemony and control Russian trade, built up a huge army that could only be financed when it was deployed outside Sweden's borders, After expansion ended the Nordic War (1700 to 1724) broke out and the over-extended Swedish empire collapsed.

Wolfgang Mommsen of London analysed the complex and chequered structure of the British Empire, which in many cases exercised control indirectly through regional power elites (especially in India and Africa) or by economic influence.

This method could only work as long as the ruled submitted voluntarily. And they were not prepared to do so after the Second World War.

The discussion of the Palestine problem from 1917 to 1948 was also of topical relevance. It emerged that the present Middle East problem was implanted from outside and that modern Palestinian nationalism is a result of European intervention. Sionism and British power politics went hand in hand.

Another subject: German and Irish immigrants to the United States had similar problems of cultural adjustment problems to those immigrant workers in this country today. But in the end they not only adapted to America, they changed it.

The early days of the Federal Republic of Germany are now history and were discussed at Würzburg under the heading New Beginning or Restoration?

Three examples serve to show continuity in West, whereas the same traditions were abruptly broken off in East Germany. One was the dispute between 1945 and 1952 about whether the traditional German civil service tradition should be retained. In the Soviet Zone of Occupation the old-style civil service was abolished and has never been restored. In the West, the Germans fought for the retention of the system and got their way despite bitter resistance from the allies.

In the Soviet Zone the administration of justice was systematically "purged" and put at the service of a new political system, whereas in the West it survived 1945 virtually unharmed. The Western allies attempted to impose a national system of social security but the Germans resisted this and the old system was maintained. All these decisions still affect us today.

The response of the Western democracies to the national socialist challenge was of great interest and even of relevance today. Anyone who wished could have drawn parallels between the uncertainty and indecisiveness of the main protagonists before the war and the present western response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

There were important home political reasons which dictated appeasement policy during the 1930s and thus prevented a firm western response to Hitler's various acts of aggression.

The British were afraid that France and America would leave them to fight on their own and that a rapid rearmament programme would hinder efforts to recover from the world economic crisis and modernise British society.

France was under such heavy economic pressure and was so divided socially that it was simply incapable of an effective response to national socialism. And in the USA, President Roosevelt regarded his New Deal policies as the main priority.

He was convinced that Hitler was dangerous but, for the sake of his home policies, he did not want to ask the isolationist congress to abandon American neutrality. *Ekkehard Böhm*

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 3 April 1980)

Western solution 'is no route to oriental social justice'

Economic liberalisation along Western lines is not the way to being social justice to the Oriental world, according to an expert in Islamic affairs.

Fritz Steppat, Professor of Islamic Studies at the Free University of Berlin, said this type of development would only deepen class differences.

Professor Steppat was speaking to a packed house at a public lecture in the Berlin State Library.

The lecture was part of the 21st conference of German Orientalists and was organised by the German Orient Society.

About 500 experts, including many from the Middle East, attended.

The huge public interest in Professor Steppat's lecture is probably symptomatic of our shocked response to recent events in the Islamic World and especially in Iran.

We do not understand, though we would like to, the backward-looking forms of Islam as practised, for example, in Saudi Arabia. These forms are no more and no less than defence measures by the upper classes against the opposition, which has assumed a religious mantle.

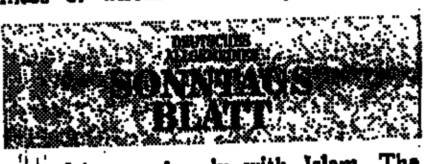
Professor Steppat's lecture showed clearly that it is not Islam as a religion which is to blame for the religious revolutionary processes taking place almost throughout the Middle East, but the historical condition of the people in these countries.

Modernisation has not fulfilled the hopes they had in it and their disappointment has changed into rebellion against those who introduced modernisation, the westernised upper classes and indeed all foreigners.

The upper classes have not brought about the hoped-for political and social change but only dependence on foreign countries, which is all the more humiliating the more traditionalistic the people are.

Economic liberalisation on the Western model did not bring social justice to the oriental world but a deepening of class differences. Attempts at pluralism failed, often degenerating into one-party systems with police state tendencies.

Where feudalism remained, progress alienated the ruler from the people, the mass of whom have always identified



with Islam and only with Islam. The principles of Islam limit the power of the ruler so that when the psychological conditions are right rebellions are inevitable.

The occupation of the Grand Mosque in Mecca was a clear warning to the Saudi rulers and as a result they are now considering introducing a constitution. Until now, the Koran has been the only guideline of politics.

Islam, Professor Steppat explained, is not a uniform religion. It allows considerable latitude for interpretation and this is why Islamisation has taken such different forms in different countries.

Public interest in oriental studies naturally centres around the Middle East, but for orientalists the Middle East is only one area of their studies. Oriental studies cover all of Asia as far as China and includes the African continent.

Research into these countries, their peoples, languages and cultures is the concern of orientalists — and this research cannot be done in ivory towers in West Germany.

The German Orient Society (DMG), founded in 1845, is the professional association of German orientalists and finances among other things the Nepal Research Centre in Kathmandu, from where scholars undertake long journeys by foot to find and decipher Sanskrit inscriptions.

They then photocopy these inscriptions and send copies to Nepalese cultural institutions and to the Prussian State Library in Berlin. The Library has 70,000 of these documents which are vital to oriental research.

The DMG has started a similar project in Mauretania; and in Beirut the German Orient Institute, a subsidiary of the DMG, is working on a new Arab dictionary — despite all the troubles there.

Up to now, oriental studies have been regarded as a strictly academic subject in which graduates have no other job prospects but an academic career.

This must change. The complicated dialogue with the Third World is now the main problem of our age and so we must realise how urgently needed orientalists with practical bent are needed in industry, politics and education.

The universities have taken notice of the criticism that they neglect contemporary history and economics in their oriental studies courses. Two new professorships have been established at the

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MEDICINE

New drug could be breakthrough in treating rheumatism

Rheumatism and related diseases of the joints, though not killers, affect between 20 and 30 per cent of the total population.

Professor H. Hoffmeister of the National Health Office's Social Medicine Institute in Berlin says that the annual cost of treating the disease is DM7bn and he estimates the indirect cost through working days lost and early retirement at DM30 bn.

But because rheumatism is not high up in the cause-of-death statistics, it tends to be underrated. The German Rheumatism League estimates that between 3m and 5m people suffer from severe rheumatism.

They also reckon with a further increase in degenerative forms of the disease, caused by "wear and tear." The main reasons for this is greater life expectancy and thus an increase in possible causes of wear and tear on the joints.

Progress in therapy for the most serious forms of rheumatic diseases has been slow. About 20 per cent of all forms of chronic polyarthritis (chronic rheumatism of the joints) is largely incurable: patients become cripples, increasingly unable to move, in need of care.

Sudden improvement in many cases

W. Meyer of Eilbeck Hospital in Hamburg pointed out that in half of these cases, the patient's condition suddenly improves and the symptoms disappear without treatment.

A new anti-rheumatism drug, piroxicam, has been developed which could be a breakthrough in rheumatism therapy. It has powerful anti-rheumatic effects (average daily dose only 20 milligrammes) and a long half-life period, which means that one tablet a day is enough to achieve a steady concentration of the substance in the blood.

Piroxicam, now being marketed under the trade name Felden, was synthesised over 15 years ago in the research laboratories of the American company Pfizer in Groton — a fine example of the development of a specific drug for specific diseases.

Scientists E. H. Wiseman and J. Lombardino worked quite systematically: they manipulated the molecules until they came up with the properties they wanted. At last they came up with a derivative of oenolic acid of the oxicamic class of substances, which has no chemical similarity to any known anti-rheumatism drug.

The effect of this substance is at least partly attributable to a property other anti-rheumatic drugs also have, namely the prevention of prostaglandin synthesis.

Piroxicam also attacks the white blood corpuscles, the "inflammation cells", slowing down or preventing them from getting to the centre of the inflammation.

There are no longer any doubts about the clinical effectiveness of the substance. There have been many controlled studies of the most important rheumatic



diseases, particularly in the English-speaking world.

There has only been one long-term study in West Germany, that of M. Schattenkirchner of Munich University Polyclinic and H. Müller-Fassbaender of the Bad Abbach Rheuma Centre, dealing with rheumatic disease which hardly responds to treatment: spondylitis ankylosans, also known as Morbus Bechterew.

This is a chronic inflammation of the spine leading to increasing deformity and stiffness. The two rheumatologists used piroxicam as well physical therapy on 83 patients. The treatment not only led to a rapid reduction of subjective complaints but also to a clear improvement in patients' mobility. A striking feature of the treatment was the normalisation of the blood settling velocity, a sign that inflammation processes are being directly influenced. It is not yet clear what immunological mechanisms are affected.

At a Rheumatism Symposium in Hamburg, Schattenkirchner described the side-effects of piroxicam as comparatively slight. He found that 80 per cent of the spondylitis patients had "an extremely good tolerance of the substance."

The main side-effect of all non-steroid anti-rheumatism drugs is the irritation of the mucous membrance of the stomach, which can even lead to ulcers. Piroxicam is better than other anti-rheumatic drugs in this respect.

A final judgement cannot, however, be made until the drug has been tried on more rheumatism patients.

The three pillars of rheumatism therapy are: physical (heat, cold and movement therapy), anti-rheumatism drugs and operation. As with many other chronic diseases, it is essential that diagnosis should be swift and that the patient should get specific individual treatment from the beginning.

Professor H. Mathies of the Bad Abbach rheumatism centre complained recently of the many wrong diagnoses and false therapy in this area.

As for anti-rheumatism drugs, one has the impression that rheumatic diseases are getting easier to treat as more and more anti-rheumatic drugs come onto the market. However these drugs are primarily symptomatica, drugs that assuage or eliminate pains and inflammation.

Then come so-called basis therapeutica which do not, as the name suggests, attack the cause of the disease but form the matrix of therapy. Doctors hope that in the long term they can prevent or reduce rheumatic inflammation which, in the case of polyarthritis, first attacks the capsular ligaments, then destroys the articular cartilage and finally attacks and deforms the bones. However, treatment with these basis therapeutica is not usually enough in itself.

It is noteworthy that the frequency of side-effects of the various substances differs according to what rheumatic diseases are being treated. Piroxicam for example has more negative side-effects when used on chronic polyarthritis patients than on spondylitis patients.

Rheumatism is of course not one disease but a number of diseases having in common that they attack the motor apparatus and the skeleton. The causes of rheumatism are still unknown, except for some metabolic diseases which affect the joints and are thus classified as rheumatism — gout for example.

For this reason alone it is clear that not all rheumatic diseases will react in the same way to the same drug, apart from individual peculiarities.

We can only expect a decisive breakthrough in rheumatism therapy when the causes have been discovered and the cellular or molecular workings of the disease revealed.

Jochen Aumiller

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 9 April 1980)

Patients say what they think about hospital

West German hospitals are expensive and ultra-modern — but cold and impersonal, according to a poll among patients by Infas, the Institute of Applied Social Sciences.

The poll, commissioned by the Bonn Ministry of Labour, asked patients if they would go back to the hospital they had last been in.

Only 38 per cent said they would; 23 per cent said the last hospital they had been in had been unsatisfactory; 61 per cent said it had been "acceptable on the whole" but they still would not want to go back to it.

The Allensbach Demoscopy Institute has found that one in two patients is afraid of hospital, and 45 per cent have the feeling of being "powerless and defenceless."

West German hospitals treat 11m patients a year. Their pulses are no longer taken by nurses. Instead they can hear their heartbeats over loudspeakers. Humming computers transmit data on vital functions on to TV monitors. One nurse at Grosshadern Clinic in Munich said that there were so many patients that some were simply forgotten and left sitting in wheelchairs in the corridors.

Hospitals are getting bigger and more expensive. The new hospital in Münster for example is 80 metres high and, according to an advertising brochure, "as comfortable as a three-star hotel."

The huge clinic in Aachen now being built will be the biggest closed building complex in Europe — 250 metres long, 135 metres wide, eight storeys, "crowned" with 24 50-metre towers, 1580 beds, 52 operating theatres. Who would want to be a patient there?

Professor Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, head of the Allensbach Institute, says: "The number of doctors is increasing and hospitals are ultramodern but at the same time the coldness and anonymity which depresses patients is increasing."

This is clear from the Infas poll. Only 51 per cent of the 2,788 people asked regarded the hospitals as competent; 40 per cent thought doctors were overworked and one in four patients rated them as "authoritarian" or "nervous, flustered."

Only 21 per cent said that doctors had time for their patients.

The replies to questions on auxiliary personnel are equally alarming: 66 per cent did say that nurses and orderlies were "willing to help" but 43 thought the staff were overworked. Whereas in the past nurses had a reputation for being self-sacrificing and selfless, the main impression today is one of professionalism and functionalism. Only 3 per cent thought hospital staff were "self-sacrificing."

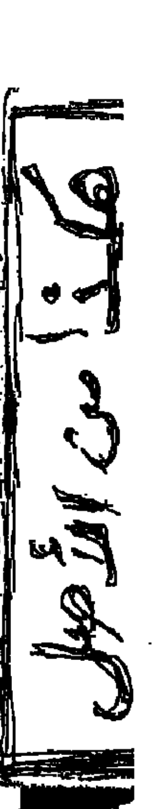
Only 14 per cent thought that patients in clinics were treated "individually." Only 20 per cent thought nurses had "time for patients."

Patients' judgement of the staff's competence is damning: they say that only 37 believe that nurses and orderlies are "competent."

Another result of the poll that should make politicians think is that 73 per cent of patients prefer small hospitals which, according to the Hospital Finance Law, are no longer to receive government subsidies.

Peter Jentsch

(Die Welt, 10 April 1980)



HEALTH

New sign language helps deaf to talk about complex subjects

Deaf children in most European countries are forced to lip-read to communicate with non-deaf children in school. However, as soon as the teacher leaves the classroom they start using their own sign-language, which enables complex communication even though some educationists regard it as an inadequate substitute. This incorrect view can be attributed to the fact that up to now knowledge of the study of human language has been confined almost exclusively to the spoken and written word.

From this point of view it is hardly surprising that the organisers of the Dahlem (Berlin) conferences held every four years had to postpone a planned workshop on the education of deaf and dumb children. The basic questions about similarities and differences between sign language and spoken language still have not been answered. And so 46 leading scientists in different fields were invited to Berlin to discuss: "Sign language and spoken language: biological limitations of linguistic form."

What emerged was that a radical rethink is needed. Sign languages are far more than gestures and mime. By means of them, people can communicate on the most complex subjects.

This, unfortunately, does not apply to the German speaking countries but primarily to ASL — American Sign Language. As comparisons showed, this language has developed completely independently of the English language environment. ASL has been systematically developed and is now used in the third generation of deaf families.

Even the experts in Berlin were astonished at the ease and perfection with which deaf and dumb American colleagues could talk about scientific problems. The conference was attended by one of the hundred specially trained ASL interpreters in the USA. There are even poems and plays in American sign language.

Ursula Bellugi of the Salk Institute of Biological Studies in California said that the study of sign language raised fundamental questions about the nature of language such as "What would language be like if it were not based on the voice and the ear?"

Latest research shows that spoken language and sign language have the same basic elements: in spoken language we have arbitrary and, in isolation, meaningless sounds (phonemes) which are formed into the smallest meaningful units (morphemes); then there is the grammatical level, a structure in which single signs and words are "bound together." The sounds and the rules for their combination differ from one language to the next but this basic structure is common to all languages.

A superficial view, according to Mrs Bellugi, led scientists to assume that sign language was just a collection of pictorial gestures such as non-deaf people also use (scratching one's head, shrugging one's shoulders, pointing to someone, etc). However, it has since become clear that sign language also uses sets of phonemes and rules for the combination of these units. Although some of the origins of sign language may be pictorial in origin, they have been subdivided into these small units and subjected to grammatical laws. Only thus is it possible that new or complex contexts can be represented by signs and understood with the eyes.

Of course there are also important differences between spoken and sign languages. The possibilities of expression influence grammatical structure whether the language is spoken or sign language. It is hardly surprising that ASL signs take twice as long to make as the corresponding words. The amazing thing is that this does not affect the speed of the statement as a whole: in a given period of time as much can be said in ASL as in spoken English. So it is obviously the listener's capacity for absorbing and understanding the message which determines the speed of any language.

Finger language, in which the deaf imitate the sounds they have lip-read, takes twice as long as ASL or spoken English to say a given thing. It does not have the same grammatical structures. This fact could be regarded as proof that the communication systems the deaf and dumb are normally required to learn are inadequate.

The case of American sign language exemplifies clearly how a logical capacity for communication must be structured. First an "inner language" and a vocabulary of concepts must be developed. Deaf and dumb children should learn this inner language as early and as throughly as possible. Only if this is done to they have a complete basis for translation into and from other languages.

This problem can be illustrated by looking at children brought up bilingually who are not at home in either language unless they can learn the inner structures.

This means that lip-reading and finger-language should only be first "foreign languages" for deaf and dumb children.

The Berlin experts called for scientists and the general public to accept these new findings the most important of which is that sign languages are self-sufficient independent languages. "This brings hope to the deaf but also shows what a long research and the teaching of the deaf still have to go."

Professor Detlev Ploog of the Munich Max Planck Institute was probably speaking for many when he said: "I have given up my prejudices against sign language."

Justin Westhoff

(Der Tagesspiegel, 2 April 1980)

Continued from page 10

ate act of (self) defence against German indifference and German sentimentality about its their own crimes (see *Holocaust*).

The version could be a product of careerism or moralism or a confused combination of both. It would be presumptuous to say which of these it is.

It is a typically German delusion that the great moral debates are the really important ones. Hochhuth's plays, Heyme's theatre, *The Investigation* — all have the great advantage that they allow people to take sides so gloriously.

Theatre, the moral institution, thus becomes the scene of moral shadow-boxing in which all the arguments and slogans are known before the fight even begins: on the one side the indignant, on the others the indignant at the indignation, with ranks on both sides firmly closed — and eyes too.

If morality in this country were anywhere near as great as our delight in moral debates, moralistic talk shows, then no one in this country would need to be afraid of Germany any more.

Benjamin Henrichs

(Die Zeit, 28 March 1980)

Blind children learn from zoo experiment

Cologne Zoo holds special lessons for blind children in which the children are allowed to touch the animals and can form an impression of what they look like.

The scheme has proved a great success according to the Zoo's magazine: "Seeing with our hands — we have had very positive experience with this scheme here in the zoo. These lessons are an essential step in getting to know the world about us."

This was written by Theodor Düren, headmaster of the Land Blind School in Düren.

Teachers of the blind regret that only a few zoos in West Germany have special classes for blind children: Cologne, Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Hanover.

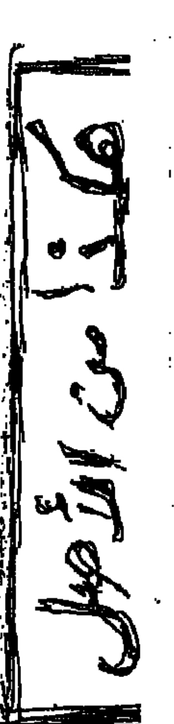
The reluctance of zoos is understandable, though. Brigitte Apel of Hanover Zoo says: "As the children get most of their information by touch, we have to allow them to touch selected animals." And zoo keepers are not happy about their animals being touched because there is a danger of infection and changes in animal behaviour.

Wolf Haferkamp, director of the Cologne Zoo School, says: "We only make an exception in the case of the blind, because they cannot learn any other way than by touch."

Zoo school teachers say that blind children are their most attentive and grateful pupils, but visits from blind children also mean a lot of work. The animals used in teaching have to be extremely patient. Zoo keepers often spend weeks observing animals to see which of them are most suitable to be used in teaching: "Zoo animals are not pets after all. They are not used to being touched."

The 150 blind children at Düren school will have to wait for a while before they can grasp what an elephant looks like. "Our elephant has turned nasty and he has even started attacking keepers. It would be too risky at the moment." Snakes, on the other hand, are very patient. Blind children in Cologne put their hands on the python Elise and feel it moving. Other animals they are allowed to touch are: parrots, penguins, asses, goats, monkeys and sea bears. In Hanover, they are even allowed to touch lion and lion and tiger cubs sometimes. Blind children learn what certain animals smell like and what noises they make: "And they are able to find their way around when they visit the zoo with their parents."

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 5 April 1980)



■ RELIGION

Sacrifices and rewards: why women take holy orders

Age-old masonry, long, dark corridors and oppressive silence are the hallmarks of a convent, the home of women who have chosen to renounce the worldly life and become nuns.

What makes women take holy orders? Are they disappointed by life, by people? I wondered as I knocked at the door of the convent of the Sisters of Divine Providence.

They are members of an international order represented in West Germany, Holland, Latin America, Africa and Indonesia. Their headquarters are in Münster, Westphalia, from where 648 sisters in 39 units are supervised.

I was expected and am taken straight away to the novitiate, which is where novices, young sisters who have yet to take full orders, spend their first years alongside a number of older nuns.

From the distance I can hear loud laughter and shouting. I am welcomed in a cordial, hearty manner by two young girls in grey convent uniform.

Shortly afterwards I am sitting alongside them and Sister Canisia, the provincial mother superior, and Sister Sebastia, who is in charge of the novitiate.

We are seated in a brightly lit room decorated in a modern manner. The women seem self-assured, open-minded and curious to hear my questions.

Before joining the order they were all involved in youth work of some kind or other. The two novices studied social work and theology respectively.

"Sooner or later," one says, "I felt that what I was doing was not enough. I felt a powerful inner compulsion. I resisted it, travelling and living the good life.

"But there was no getting away from the feeling and I decided to take orders. Yet I had to promise my parents I would return home the moment I felt unhappy."

"I tried to do more for Christ," says Sister Hildegard, 25, "But I was always somewhat out on a limb and found no-one who really seemed to share my outlook on life.

"Then I came here and immediately sensed that people here might not be perfect but they were on a quest and heading in the same direction as me."

True enough, there is no mistaking the atmosphere. It is the way the women treat each other, listening with interest to what they all say and trying to understand what they hear.

Discussion, conversation and criticism are fundamental components of community life. "A woman who takes holy orders must first and foremost be able to communicate," says the Mother Superior.

"A community of such different characters and temperaments would be im*possible if we were not to speak frankly* about everything that upsets us."

How much leeway does the individual nun have for herself or for a more intensive relationship with someone else?

"Provided the needs of the individual are not directed against the aims of the community," says Sister Sebastia, "we feel it is important for everyone to be able to close the door and be on their own now and again.

"Nowadays a close friendship between two nuns is readily accepted too."

But why is a close relationship with a man out of the question? Nuns take an oath pledging themselves to poverty, obedience and chastity for Christ's sake.

"We can only fulfill this vow by means of personal love of Christ," one nun explains. What does this exclusive love of God exactly mean?

"Can you tell me exactly why you love a particular man?" the Mother Superior asks in reply. "In a happy marriage a special relationship evolves over the years until the time comes when *you are no longer interested in another* man.

"A nun must exclusively love God to the extent that in the long term she is incapable of marriage because Christ has become everything to her."

It is difficult for the nuns to define this relationship exactly or even to talk about their love of God. Outsiders are probably not in a position to fully understand the radical nature of the religious life.

Yet they readily admit that going without a partner and dispensing with sexuality, children and a family is frequently felt to be extremely difficult.

There are times when all of them have wondered whether it was all worth while. A firm belief in everlasting life in God is an important factor in their resolve.

"If I didn't believe fulfilment and happiness really began after death I would resign here and now," one sister comments.

A fundamental cause of the hardship of the times is, as they see it, the fact that people are no longer capable of religious belief and try to understand the world solely in rational terms.

Providence is their answer to hardship, but they no longer regard relieving material hardship of social outcasts as their main mission in life.

Hardship nowadays is felt to be the increasing sense of loneliness felt by the individual, fear of life, the dissolution of the family, the vain search for a purpose in life.

Nuns try to counter this hardship by practising exemplary love of their neighbours as nurses, old folks' helps, kindergarten teachers, schoolteachers and pastoral assistants.

Their aim is to heed the freedom and dignity of the individual regardless how poor, old or sick he or she may be.

"If I make a point of not bustling a dying person into a bathroom, staying by him in his hour of need and holding his hand, then surely I can bring a little more humanity into my immediate surroundings."

To what extent is this more than patchwork? Is it just relief for the individual or does it have a wider effect on society?

Their work concentrates on the individual, they say, but they are well aware of the need for political commitment, although they do not think so much in terms of party politics.

Instead they aim to bring specific influence to bear on government activities by means, say, of active membership of professional organisations.

They recently backed a full-scale protest to the Bonn government against the planned reduction in nursing staff at old people's homes.

The younger nuns in particular said there was no such thing as an ideal political party, one that endorsed their values in the way they would prefer.

What about the role of women in society today? This is the first question that makes them stop and think. They are not directly subjected to masculine tutelage.

They themselves decide on the rules that govern their lives. Within the order democratic structures prevail.

Fundamental decisions are taken by delegates elected by the entire membership to a kind of Parliament. The Mother Superior is also elected for a maximum of two six-year terms, then she returns to ordinary status.

"Men and women must be equal in worth, not in kind," says Sister Hildegard. The Mother Superior is annoyed at women being pushed around at r... and by the sudden return to favour of the housewife now women are in demand as members of the labour f...

But she too calls for consideration of what she rates typically womanly characteristics — the desire to care, tend and protect.

Women no longer think in terms of service, she says, and this may well be why convents have not gained ground recently in the same way as sects of one kind and another have done.

In the past an average of 40 girls a year joined the order. Now there are only two to four newcomers.

Sister Canisia enumerates as typically manly characteristics the desire to assume responsibility and engage in political, formative activity.

How, I wonder, does she reconcile this view with her role as Mother Superior of 648 nuns? It must surely call for a high degree of responsibility, independence and determination to ... one's way.

The organisation of the convent and the order may be democratic but monasteries as a whole form part of the male-dominated hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church.

Are women really equal in worth given that women to this day are not allowed to become priests? The young nuns seem to regard this issue as ... problem.

Jesus enlisted men only as his disciples, Sister Sebastia says. Women followed him but he did not appoint them to office.

Cautiously and hesitantly she expresses a hope that women might "perhaps in 100 years" be admitted to the priesthood.

When I leave the convent that evening I do so feeling I have left another world. My feelings are contradictory. ... peace, cordiality and heartfelt effort ... to shirk questions impressed me.

"The community carries me," Sister Hildegard said. These women trying to live lives in accordance with a lofty ideal of neighbourly love and humanity need this backing strongly.

They doubtless need the stability, the confirmation, the fulfilment of their ambitions the closed system and ... organisation and objectives of life in a religious community.

The individual seldom has the advantage of such a community to give him the strength to bear resistance, disappointments and setbacks he is sure to encounter if he tries to practise Christian charity.

Ingrid Rieskamp

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 5 April 1980)



'On a quest and heading in the same direction': Sister Hildegard and Sister Chi... of the Sisters of Divine Providence. (Photo: Weihs)

SPORT

End of the road for a young driver

...mula 2 motor racing is regarded ...y many young drivers as no more ...a step in the direction of a For... 1 career. At the beginning of this ...n Markus Höttinger, a 23-year-old ...trian, was one of those who felt this his chance of making the grade.

...t his dreams of the big time soon ... In the first qualifying race for the ...la 2 European championship, held ...ruxton, England, on Easter Monday, ...me unstuck in the first lap.

...the second race, at Hockenheim on ...April, he was injured in a crash on ...fourth lap and died within an hour. ... him at least Formula 2 was not to ... step in the direction of Formula 1; ...as the end of the road.

Höttinger, who had made a name for himself in rally racing, was not the only driver to miss out on the chequered flag ... Thruxton and Hockenheim.

Breakneck overtaking, speeding round ...nds and hubcap-to-hubcap challenges, ...th quarter neither asked nor given, led ...any number of crashes and collisions.

"Ruthless work goes on at the wheel," ... Manfred Winkelhock from Waib...ngen, near Stuttgart, after he had spun ... the Thruxton course following a ...llision.

In Hockenheim he planned to give as good as he got, but it was all over in two laps when he collided with de Cesaris of Italy. The two fastest drivers had knocked each other out, as racing jargon would have it.

In races with cars that boast fully-enclosed passenger compartments crashes and collisions are regarded as just part of the game.

Take, for instance, Klaus Ludwig, the reigning national champion, in a qualifying race at Hockenheim this season. Coming into the home straight on the last lap he went in for a little "panel beating" with his main rival Axel Plankenhorn.

The two cars nudged each other in much the same ways as soccer players use their elbows or ice hockey players their padding.

Ludwig, at the wheel of a Ford Capri Turbo, succeeded in this last-minute bid to dislodge Plankenhorn, driving a Porsche 935 Turbo, from first place.

His foul cost a DM500 penalty but the fine was more than offset by DM1,500 prize money and the admiration of 50,000 spectators keen to see the thrills and spills.

Everyone knew that although cars may be written off in manoeuvres of this kind, drivers seldom come to much harm. But this is only true of races in enclosed vehicles.

In Formula racing such collisions can easily become a matter of life and death. Wheels jut out from the car bodies. There is no bodywork to protect the driver. Cars are lightweight and easily nudged off the track.

Broken wheel suspension units, severed wheels and shreds of car body can prove lethal weapons after a crash.

This was how Markus Höttinger came to grief. Four cars were involved in a collision and the Austrian youngster, who enjoyed a reputation for being level-headed, was struck on the head by a loose wheel.

The risk is much greater in Formula racing but many young and ambitious drivers readily take it. It is all or nothing, and many drivers can count themselves lucky if all they do is draw a blank.

The attraction of Formula 1 seems to exercise a dangerous spell on Formula 2, a class in which youngsters on their way up the career ladder compete in cars that are not quite as expensive or sophisticated.

Drivers who want to prove their worth must do so in Formula 2 at the latest — or put paid to hopes of the big time. So ambitious youngsters make the going.

There was a time when Formula 1 racing drivers went in for Formula 2 events too. But no longer. They find Formula 2 has grown too dangerous to be worth the risk.

Many youngsters enter for Formula 2 races at the age of 18 or 19, and it remains to be seen whether they are ready for Formula racing. Often they are not, with disastrous results.

A new generation is on the way up, an Automobilclub von Deutschland press release announced in advance publicity for the Jim Clark Race in Hockenheim.

Young drivers who made names for themselves in the small time last season are now entering in large numbers for the season's Formula 2 races.

But a single winter is often much too short to adapt to what is undeniably a tremendous change. Scruples and responsibility are cast aside in the headlong rush to the top.

Manfred Winkelhock is an old hand at 28. He is the last member of the former BMW junior team who is still out in the cold. The others, Surer, Cheever and Giaccomelli, have all made the transition to Formula 1.

He must feel disappointed, still down in the Second Division and condemned to being dismissed as second-rate. Others step on it to get to the top at any price rather than suffer this fate.

Rolf Heggen

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 15 April 1980)



Collisions a matter of life or death (Photos: Baumann)

Table-tennis team misses title by hair's breadth

Runners-up in the European championship finals, having come back from behind to almost snatch victory from the jaws of defeat, the West German table tennis team sat back and brooded.

It was half past two in the morning in their Berne hotel. They didn't know whether to laugh or cry. They had just spent 4 hours 10 minutes playing Sweden.

They were 2-0 down, 3-1 down, 4-2 down and drew level at four-all. Then they finally lost 5-4.

Eleven years after losing 5-3 to Japan in the Munich world championships it was the first major achievement by a West German table tennis team and its first appearance in the European championship finals.

So they might well have been happy. But chief coach Istvan Korpa voiced the mixed feelings they all shared: "Sure, the Swedes were favourites. We have fared so badly this season that such a narrow defeat was much better than we had any reason to expect.

"But when a gold medal is only a ... away you are understandably disappointed to miss out by a hair's breadth."

Wilfried Lieck, a 34-year-old primary school teacher from Altena, Westphalia, must have been particularly disappointed. After the team had drawn level his game, the final game, was the decider.

He fought to the brink of exhaustion against Ulf Carlsson, 15 years his junior, but lost 21-19, 21-19 and burst into tears.

"Why did it have to be me?" he sobbed and slunk to his hotel room, leaving his beer and cheese platter untouched. His nerves were in shreds.

No-one was complaining. "Wilfried risked all he had to give and lost," said coach Korpa. "It would be unfair to criticise him."

But the team were so disappointed by Lieck's narrow defeat that it was some time before they remembered they ought to thank their lucky stars they had fared so well.

Even then their pleasure was a little jaundiced by the unanswered query: why do we always have to be no more than second-best?

"We made a tremendous mark here in Berne," said Korpa, "and we have shown that we can maintain our form for several days of a tournament."

Defeat in the final surely proved the West German team to be one of the best in Europe, but only when they concentrate and feel confident they are no worse than the Swedish, Hungarian or Yugoslav aces.

Take champion Peter Stellwag, 23, as a classic example of how West German table tennis players' performances vary.

His previous games had been average to mediocre, but his showing in the final elicited praise from Eberhard Schöler, world championship runner-up in 1969, who is not given to hasty praise:

"On today's form Peter is one of the all-time greats."

This, of course, was the proviso, but with concentration and a clear head he was the first player to defeat Stellan Bengtsson in the entire tournament. He also beat Ulf Thorsell and Ulf Carlsson.

Hans-Wilhelm Gäb, vice-president of the West German Table Tennis Association and himself a former member of the national team, referred to Stellwag's "strokes of genius."

But coach Korpa did not entirely agree: "He gets himself into too many critical scrapes. After a series of supershots he takes it easy, which detracts from his value, is dangerous and often spells defeat."

Yet Stellwag seems on the way too taking this criticism to heart. "There are times when not even I understand myself," he is on record as saying.

Three times in succession he was national youth champion, and in 1974 runner-up in the European youth championships. He has since failed to live up to expectations.

He was admired in his club rather than than encouraged to do even better. His airs and graces, his curses and theatrical attitudes that put him out of his stride were tolerated.

In Berne he was the picture of concentration and gave rise to hopes Hans-Wilhelm Gäb put like this: "I reckon we shall sort out Peter yet. At 23 he is still in the early days of his career."

Ulf Sommer

(Die Welt, 10 April 1980)



Ursula Kamizuru, of Duisburg, one of the fourth-place getters in the women's individual section of the European table-tennis championships in Berne.